

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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BRITISH THEATRE;
TRAGÉDIES.



— L O N D O N —

Printed for John Bell near Exeter Exchange in the

BELL'S EDITION.



THE

MOURNING BRIDE;

A TRAGEDY, by Mr. CONGREVE.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Dury-Lane.

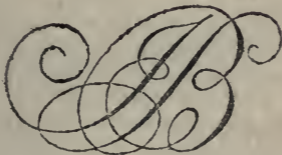
Regulated from the Prompt-Book,

By *PERMISSION* of the *MANAGERS*,

By Mr. HOPKINS, Prompter.

— *Neque enim lex æquior ulla,
Quàm necis artifices arte perire suâ.*

OVID, de Arte Am.

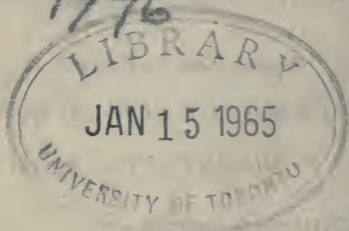


L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN BELL, near *Exeter-Exchange*, in the *Strand*,
and C. ETHERINGTON, at *York*.

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To her Royal Highness the

P R I N C E S S.

MADAM,

THAT high station, which, by your birth, you hold above the people, exacts from every one, as a duty, whatever honours they are capable of paying to your Royal Highness: but that more exalted place, to which your virtues have raised you, above the rest of princes, makes the tribute of our admiration and praise, rather a choice, more immediately preventing that duty. The public gratitude is ever founded on a public benefit; and what is universally blessed, is always an universal blessing. Thus, from yourself we derive the offerings which we bring; and that incense which arises to your name, only returns to its original, and but naturally requires the parent of its being.

From hence it is, that this poem, constituted on a moral whose end it is to recommend and to encourage virtue, of consequence, has recourse to your Royal Highness's patronage; aspiring to cast itself beneath your feet, and declining approbation, 'till you shall condescend to own it, and vouchsafe to shine upon it, as on a creature of your influence.

It is from the example of princes, that virtue becomes a fashion in the people; for even they who are averse to instruction, will yet be fond of imitation.

But there are multitudes who never can have means nor opportunities of so near an access, as to partake of the benefit of such examples. And, to these, tragedy, which distinguishes itself from the vulgar poetry by the dignity of its characters, may be of use and information. For they who are at that distance from original greatness, as to be deprived of the happiness of contemplating the perfections, and real excellencies of your Royal Highness's person in your court, may yet behold some small sketch-

es and imagings of the virtues of your mind, abstracted, and represented on the theatre.

Thus poets are instructed, and instruct; not alone by precepts which persuade, but also by examples which illustrate. Thus is delight interwoven with instruction; when not only virtue is prescribed, but also represented.

But if we are delighted with the liveliness of a feigned representation of great and good persons and their actions, how must we be charmed with beholding the persons themselves? If one or two excelling qualities, barely touched in the single action and small compass of a play, can warm an audience with a concern and regard even for the seeming success and prosperity of the actor, with what zeal must the hearts of all be filled for the continued and encreasing happiness of those who are the true and living instances of elevated and persisting virtue? Even the vicious themselves must have a secret veneration for those peculiar graces and endowments which are daily so eminently conspicuous in your Royal Highness; and, though repining, feel a pleasure, which, in spite of envy, they per-force approve.

If, in this piece, humbly offered to your Royal Highness, there shall appear the resemblance of any of those many excellencies which you so promiscuously possess, to be drawn so as to merit your least approbation, it has the end and accomplishment of its design. And however imperfect it may be in the whole, through the inexperience or incapacity of the author; yet if there is so much as to convince your Royal Highness, that a play may be, with industry, so disposed (in spite of the licentious practice of the modern theatre) as to become sometimes an innocent, and not unprofitable entertainment; it will abundantly gratify the ambition, and recompense the endeavours of

Your Royal Highness's

Most obedient, and

Most humbly devoted servant,

WILLIAM CONGREVE.

P R O.

P R O L O G U E.

TH E time has been, when plays were not so plenty,
 And a less number, new, would well content ye.
 Now plays did then like almanacks appear,
 And one was thought sufficient for a year :
 Though they are more like almanacks of late ;
 For in one year, I think, they're out of date.
 Nor were they, without reason, join'd together ;
 For just as one prognosticates the weather,
 How plentiful the crop, or scarce the grain,
 What peals of thunder, or what showers of rain ;
 So t'other can foretel, by certain rules,
 What crops of coxcombs, or what floods of fools.
 In such like prophecies were poets skill'd,
 Which now they find in their own tribe fulfill'd.
 The dearth of wit they did so long presage,
 Is fallen on us, and almost starves the stage.
 Were you not griev'd, as often as you saw
 Poor actors thresh such empty sheafs of straw ?
 Toiling and lab'ring at their lungs' expence,
 To start a jest, or force a little sense ?
 Hard fate for us, still harder in th' event ;
 Our authors sin, but we alone repent.
 Still they proceed, and, at our charge, write worse ;
 'Twere some amends, if they could reimburse ;
 But there's the devil, tho' their cause is lost,
 There's no recovering damages or cost.
 Good wits, forgive this liberty we take,
 Since custom gives the losers leave to speak.
 But if, provok'd, your dreadful wrath remains,
 Take your revenge upon the coming scenes :
 For that damn'd poet's spar'd, who damns a brother,
 As one thief 'scapes that executes another.
 Thus far alone does to the wits relate ;
 But from the rest we hope a better fate.
 To please, and move, has been our poet's theme,
 Art may direct, but nature is his aim ;

*And nature miss'd, in vain he boasts his art,
 For only nature can affect the heart.
 Then freely judge the scenes that shall ensue ;
 But as with freedom, judge with candour too.
 He would not lose, thro' prejudice, his cause ;
 Nor wou'd obtain, precariously, applause.
 Impartial censure he requests from all,
 Prepar'd, by just decrees, to stand or fall.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

<i>Manuel</i> , the king of Granada,	Mr. Aickin.
<i>Gonsalez</i> , his favourite,	Mr. Packer.
<i>Garcia</i> , son to <i>Gonsalez</i> ,	Mr. Davies.
<i>Perez</i> , captain of the guards,	Mr. Norris.
<i>Alonzo</i> , an officer, creature to <i>Gonsalez</i> ,	Mr. Wrighten.
<i>Osmyn</i> , a noble prisoner,	Mr. Smith.
<i>Heli</i> , a prisoner, his friend,	Mr. Hurst.
<i>Selim</i> , an eunuch,	Mr. Fawcett.

W O M E N.

<i>Almeria</i> , the princess of Granada,	Mrs. Yates.
<i>Zara</i> , a captive queen,	Miss Younge.
<i>Leonora</i> , chief attendant on the princess,	Mrs. Johnston.

Women, eunuchs, and mutes attending *Zara*, guards, &c.

SCENE, GRANADA.

T H E
M O U R N I N G B R I D E.

A C T I.

SCENE, *a room of state.*

The curtain rising slowly to soft music, discovers Almeria in mourning, Leonora waiting in mourning.

After the music, Almeria rises from her chair, and comes forward.

ALMERIA.

MUSIC has charms to sooth a savage breast,
To soften rocks, or bend a knotted oak.
I've read, that things inanimate have mov'd,
And as with living souls, have been inform'd,
By magic numbers and persuasive sound.
What then am I? Am I more senseless grown
Than trees or flint? Oh, force of constant woe!
'Tis not in harmony to calm my griefs.
Anselmo sleeps, and is at peace; last night
The silent tomb receiv'd the good old king;
He and his sorrows now are safely lodg'd
Within its cold, but hospitable bosom.
Why am not I at peace?

Leon. Dear Madam, cease,
Or moderate your grief; there is no cause——

Alm. No cause! Peace, peace; there is eternal cause,
And misery eternal will succeed.
Thou canst not tell—thou hast indeed no cause.

Leon. Believe me, Madam, I lament Anselmo,
And always did compassionate his fortune;
Have often wept, to see how cruelly
Your father kept in chains his fellow-king:

8 THE MOURNING BRIDE.

And oft, at night, when all have been retir'd,
Have stol'n from bed, and to his prison crept ;
Where, while his gaoler slept, I thro' the grate
Have softly whisper'd, and enquir'd his health ;
Sent in my sighs and pray'rs for his deliv'rance ;
For sighs and pray'rs were all that I could offer.

Alm. Indeed thou hast a soft and gentle nature.
That thus could melt to see a stranger's wrongs.
Oh, Leonora, hadst thou known Anselmo,
How wou'd thy heart have bled to see his sufferings !
Thou hadst no cause, but general compassion.

Leon. Love of my royal mistress gave me cause ;
My love of you begot my grief for him ;
For I had heard, that when the chance of war
Had bless'd Anselmo's arms with victory,
And the rich spoil of all the field, and you,
The glory of the whole, were made the prey
Of his success ; ' that then, in spite of hate,
' Revenge, and that hereditary feud
' Between Valentia's and Granada's kings,'
He did endear himself to your affection,
By all the worthy and indulgent ways
His most industrious goodness cou'd invent ;
Proposing, by a match between Alphonso
His son, the brave Valentian prince, and you,
To end the long dissention, and unite
The jarring crowns.

' *Alm.* Alphonso ! O, Alphonso !
' Thou too art quiet—long hast been at peace—
' Both, both——father and son are now no more.
' Then why am I ? Oh, when shall I have rest ?
' Why do I live to say you are no more ?
' Why are all these things thus ?—Is it of force ?
' Is there necessity I must be miserable ?
' Is it of moment to the peace of Heav'n
' That I shou'd be afflicted thus ?——If not,
' Why is it thus contriv'd ? Why are things laid
' By some unseen hand, so, as of sure consequence,
' They must to me bring curses, grief of heart,
' The last distress of life, and sure despair ?

' *Leon.* Alas ! you search too far, and think too deeply.'

Alm. Why was I carry'd to Anselmo's court ?

Or there, why was I us'd so tenderly?
 Why not ill treated, like an enemy?
 For so my father wou'd have us'd his child.
 Oh, Alphonso, Alphonso!
 Devouring seas have wash'd thee from my sight.
 No time shall raze thee from my memory;
 No, I will live to be thy monument:
 The cruel ocean is no more thy tomb:
 But in my heart thou art interr'd; there, there,
 Thy dear resemblance is for ever fix'd;
 My love, my lord, my husband still, tho' lost.

Leon. Husband! Oh, Heav'ns!

Alm. Alas! what have I said?

My grief has hurry'd me beyond all thought.
 I wou'd have kept that secret; though I know
 Thy love, and faith to me deserve all confidence.
 'But 'tis the wretch's comfort still to have
 'Some small reserve of near and inward woe,
 'Some unsuspected hoard of darling grief,
 'Which they unseen may wail, and weep, and mourn,
 'And, glutton-like, alone devour.

Leon. Indeed,

'I knew not this.

Alm. Oh, no, thou know'st not half,

'Know'st nothing of my sorrows—if thou didst—

'If I shou'd tell thee, would'st thou pity me?

'Tell me; I know thou would'st; thou art compassionate.'

Leon. Witness these tears——

Alm. I thank thee, Leonora——

'Indeed I do, for pitying thy sad mistress:

'For 'tis, alas! the poor prerogative

'Of greatness to be wretched, and unpitied——

'But I did promise I wou'd tell thee—What?

'My miseries? Thou dost already know 'em.

'And when I told thee thou didst nothing know,

'It was because thou didst not know Alphonso:

'For to have known my loss, thou must have known

'His worth, his truth, and tenderness of love.'

Leon. The memory of that brave prince stands fair
 In all report—

And I have heard imperfectly his loss;

But fearful to renew your troubles past,
I never did presume to ask the story.

Alm. If for my swelling heart I can, I'll tell thee.
I was a welcome captive in Valentia,
E'en on the day when Manuel, my father,
Led on his conqu'ring troops high as the gates
Of king Anselmo's palace; which in rage,
And heat of war, and dire revenge, he fir'd.
The good king flying to avoid the flames,
Started amidst his foes, and made captivity
His fatal refuge—Wou'd that I had fall'n
Amidst those flames—but 'twas not so decreed.
Alphonso, who foresaw my father's cruelty,
Had borne the queen and me on board a ship
Ready to sail; and when this news was brought
We put to sea; but being betray'd by some
Who knew our flight, we closely were pursu'd,
And almost taken; when a sudden storm
Drove us, and those that follow'd, on the coast
Of Afric: There our vessel struck the shore
And bulging 'gainst a rock, was dash'd in pieces;
But Heav'n spar'd me for yet much more affliction!
Conducting them who follow'd us, to shun
The shore, and save me floating on the waves,
While the good queen and my Alphonso perish'd.

Leon. Alas! were you then wedded to Alphonso?

Alm. That day, that fatal day, our hands were join'd.
For when my lord beheld the ship pursuing,
And saw her rate so far exceeding ours,
He came to me, and begg'd me by my love,
I wou'd consent the priest shou'd make us one;
That whether death or victory ensu'd
I might be his, beyond the power of fate:
The queen too did assist his suit—I granted;
And in one day was wedded and a widow,

Leon. Indeed 'twas mournful——

Alm. 'Twas—as I have told thee——

For which I mourn, and will for ever mourn;
Nor will I change these black and dismal robes,
Or ever dry these swoln and watery eyes;

Or ever taste content, or peace of heart,
While I have life, and thought of my Alphonso.

‘ Leon. Look down, good Heav’n, with pity on her
sorrows,

‘ And grant that time may bring her some relief.

‘ Alm. Oh, no ! time gives increase to my afflictions.

‘ The circling hours, that gather all the woes

‘ Which are diffus’d thro’ the revolving year,

‘ Come heavy laden with th’ oppressing weight

‘ To me ; with me, successively, they leave

‘ The sighs, the tears, the groans, the restless cares,

‘ And all the damps of grief, that did retard their flight :

‘ They shake their downy wings, and scatter all

‘ The dire collected dews on my poor head :

‘ Then fly with joy and swiftness from me.’

[Shouts at a distance.

Leon. Hark !

The distant shouts proclaim your father’s triumph.

O cease, for Heav’n’s sake, assuage a little

This torrent of your grief, for, much I fear,

’Twill urge his wrath, to see you drown’d in tears,

When joy appears in ev’ry other face.

Alm. And joy he brings to ev’ry other heart,

But double, double weight of woe to mine :

For with him Garcia comes—Garcia, to whom

I must be sacrific’d, and all the vows

I gave my dear Alphonso basely broken.

No, it shall never be ; for I will die

First, die ten thousand deaths—Look down, look down,

Alphonso, hear the sacred vow I make ; [Kneels.

‘ One moment, cease to gaze on perfect bliss,

‘ And bend thy glorious eyes to earth and me ;’

And thou, Anselmo, if yet thou art arriv’d

Thro’ all impediments of purging fire,

To that bright Heav’n, where my Alphonso reigns,

Behold thou also, and attend my vow.

If ever I do yield, or give consent,

By any action, word, or thought, to wed

Another lord ; may then just Heav’n show’r down

Unheard of curses on me, greater far

(If such there be in angry Heaven’s vengeance)

Than

Than any I have yet endur'd—And now [*Rising.*]
 My heart has some relief; having so well
 Discharg'd this debt, incumbent on my love.
 Yet, one thing more I wou'd engage from thee.

Leon. My heart, my life, and will, are only yours.

Alm. I thank thee. 'Tis but this: anon, when all
 Are wrapp'd and busied in the general joy,
 Thou wilt withdraw, and privately with me
 Steal forth, to visit good Anselmo's tomb.

Leon. Alas! I fear some fatal resolution.

Alm. No, on my life, my faith, I mean no ill,
 Nor violence—I feel myself more light,
 And more at large, since I have made this vow.
 Perhaps I would repeat it there more solemnly.
 'Tis that, or some such melancholy thought,
 Upon my word, no more.

Leon. I will attend you.

Enter Alonzo.

Alon. The lord Gonfalez comes to tell your highness
 The king is just arriv'd.

Alm. Conduct him in.

[*Exit Alon.*]

That's his pretence; his errand is, I know,
 To fill my ears with Garcia's valiant deeds;
 And gild and magnify his son's exploits.
 But I am arm'd with ice around my heart,
 Not to be warm'd with words, or idle eloquence.

Enter Gonfalez.

Gon. Be ev'ry day of your long life like this.
 The sun, bright conquest, and your brighter eyes,
 Have all conspir'd to blaze promiscuous light,
 And bless this day with most unequal lustre.
 Your royal father, my victorious lord,
 Loaden with spoils, and ever-living laurel,
 Is ent'ring now, in martial pomp, the palace.
 Five hundred mules precede his solemn march,
 Which groan beneath the weight of Moorish wealth.
 Chariots of war, adorn'd with glitt'ring gems,
 Succeed; and next, a hundred neighing steeds,
 White as the fleecy rain on Alpine hills,
 That bound and foam, and champ the golden bit,
 As they disdain'd the victory they grace.
 Prisoners of war in shining fetters follow:

And

And captains of the noblest blood of Afric
Sweat by his chariot wheels, 'and lick and grind,
' With gnashing teeth, the dust his triumphs raise.'
The swarming populace spread every wall,
' And cling, as if with claws they did enforce
' Their hold; thro' clefted stones stretching and staring,
' As if they were all eyes, and every limb
' Would feed its faculty of admiration:'

While you alone retire, and shun this fight;
This fight, which is indeed not seen (tho' twice
The multitude should gaze) in absence of your eyes.

Alm. My lord, mine eyes ungratefully behold
The gilded trophies of exterior honours.
Nor will my ears be charm'd with sounding words,
Or pompous phrase, the pageantry of souls.
But that my father is return'd in safety,
I bend to Heav'n with thanks.

Gon. Excellent princess!
But 'tis a task unfit for my weak age
With dying words to offer at your praise.
Garcia, my son, your beauty's lowest slave,
Has better done; in proving with his sword
The force and influence of your matchless charms.

Alm. I doubt not of the worth of Garcia's deeds,
Which had been brave, though I had ne'er been born.

Leon. Madam, the king. [Flourish.]

' *Alm.* My women. I wou'd meet him.'

[Attendants to Almeria enter in mourning.

Symphony of warlike music. Enter the King, attended by
Garcia and several officers. Files of prisoners in chains,
and guards, who are ranged in order round the stage.
Almeria meets the King, and kneels: afterwards Gonfa-
lez kneels and kisses the King's hand, while Garcia does
the same to the princess.

King. Almeria, rise—My best Gonfalez, rise.
What, tears! my good old friend—

Gon. But tears of joy.
Believe me, Sir, to see you thus, has fill'd
Mine eyes with more delight than they can hold.

King. By Heav'n, thou lov'st me, and I'm pleas'd thou
do'st;

Take it for thanks, old man, that I rejoice

To see thee weep on this occasion—Some
 Here are, who seem to mourn at our success!
 Why is't, Almeria, that you meet our eyes,
 Upon this solemn day, in these sad weeds?
 In opposition to my brightness, you
 And yours are all like daughters of affliction.

Alm. Forgive me, Sir, if I in this offend.

The year, which I have vow'd to pay to Heav'n,
 In mourning and strict life, for my deliverance
 From wreck and death, wants yet to be expir'd.

King. Your zeal to Heav'n is great, so is your debt:
 Yet something too is due to me, who gave
 That life, which Heav'n preserv'd. A day bestow'd
 In filial duty, had atton'd and given
 A dispensation to your vow—No more.

'Twas weak and wilful—and a woman's error.
 Yet, upon thought, it doubly wounds my sight,
 To see that sable worn upon the day,
 Succeeding that, in which our deadliest foe,
 Hated Anselmo, was interr'd—By Heav'n,
 It looks as thou didst mourn for him: just so
 Thy senseless vow appear'd to bear its date,
 Not from that hour wherein thou wert preserv'd,
 But that wherein the curs'd Alphonso perish'd.
 Ha! What? thou dost not weep to think of that!

Gon. Have patience, royal Sir; the princess weeps
 To have offended you. If fate decreed,
 One pointed hour should be Alphonso's loss,
 And her deliverance, is she to blame?

King. I tell thee she's to blame, not to have feasted
 When my first foe was laid in earth, such enmity,
 Such detestation bears my blood to his;
 My daughter should have revell'd at his death,
 She should have made these palace walls to shake,
 And all this high and ample roof to ring
 With her rejoicings. What, to mourn and weep!
 Then, then to weep, and pray, and grieve! by Heav'n,
 There's not a slave, a shackled slave of mine,
 But should have smil'd that hour, through all his care,
 And shook his chains in transport and rude harmony.

Gon. What she has done, was in excess of goodness;

Betray'd by too much piety, to seem
As if she had offended.— Sure, no more.

King. To seem is to commit, at this conjuncture.
I wo't not have a seeming sorrow seen
To-day.—Retire; divest yourself with speed
Of that offensive black; on me be all
The violation of your vow; for you
It shall be your excuse, that I command it.

Gar. [*Kneeling.*] Your pardon, Sir, if I presume so far,
As to remind you of your gracious promise.

King. Rise, Garcia—I forgot. Yet stay, Almeria.

Alm. My boding heart!—What is your pleasure, Sir?

King. Draw near, and give your hand, and, Garcia,
yours:

Receive this lord, as one whom I have found
Worthy to be your husband, and my son.

Gar. Thus let me kneel to take—O not to take---
But to devote, and yield myself for ever
The slave and creature of my royal mistress.

Gon. O let me prostrate pay my worthless thanks---

King. No more; my promise long since pass'd, thy
services

And Garcia's well-try'd valour, all oblige me.

This day we triumph; but to-morrow's sun,
Garcia, shall shine to grace thy nuptials——

Alm. Oh!

[*Faints.*]

Gar. She faints! help to support her.

Gon. She recovers.

King. 'A fit of bridal fear.' How is't, Almeria?

Alm. A sudden chillness seizes on my spirits.

Your leave, Sir, to retire.

King. Garcia, conduct her.

[*Garcia leads Almeria to the door, and returns.*]

This idle vow hangs on her woman's fears,

'I'll have a priest shall preach her from her faith,

'And make it sin, not to renounce that vow

'Which I'd have broken.' Now, what would Alonzo?

Enter Alonzo.

Alon. Your beauteous captive, Zara, is arriv'd,

And with a train as if she still were wife

To Alucacin, and the Moor had conquer'd.

King. It is our will she should be so attended.

'Bear hence these prisoners.' Garcia, which is he,
Of whose mute valour you relate such wonders?

[Prisoners led off.]

Gar. Osmyn, who led the Moorish horse; but he,
Great Sir, at her request, attends on Zara.

King. He is your prisoner; as you please dispose him.

Gar. I would oblige him, but he shuns my kindness;
And with a haughty mien, and stern civility,
Dumbly declines all offers. If he speak,
'Tis scarce above a word; as he were born
Alone to do, and did disdain to talk;
At least to talk where he must not command.

King. Such fullness, and in a man so brave,
Must have some other cause than his captivity.
Did Zara, then, request he might attend her?

Gar. My lord, she did.

King. That, join'd with his behaviour,
Begets a doubt. I'd have 'em watch'd; perhaps
Her chains hang heavier on him than his own.

*Enter Alonzo, Zara and Osmyn bound, conducted by Perez
and a guard, and attended by Selim and several mutes
and eunuchs in a train.*

King. What welcome, and what honours, beautiful
Zara,

A king and conqueror can give, are yours.
A conqueror indeed, where you are won;
Who with such lustre strike admiring eyes,
That had our pomp been with your presence grac'd,
Th' expecting crowd had been deceiv'd; and seen
The monarch enter not triumphant, but
In pleasing triumph led; your beauty's slave.

Zar. If I on any terms could condescend
To like captivity, or think those honours,
Which conquerors in courtesy bestow,
Of equal value with unborrow'd rule
And native right to arbitrary sway,
I might be pleas'd, when I behold this train
With usual homage wait: but when I feel
These bonds, I look with loathing on myself,
And scorn vile slavery, though doubly hid
Beneath mock-praises, and disssembled state.

King. Those bonds! 'Twas my command you should
How durst you, Perez, disobey?

[be free.]

Perez.

Perez. Great Sir,

Your order was she should not wait your triumph ;
But at some distance follow, thus attended.

King. 'Tis false ; 'twas more ; I bid she should be free ;
If not in words, I bid it by my eyes.

Her eyes did more than bid——Free her and hers
With speed——yet stay——my hands alone can make
Fit restitution here——Thus I release you,
And by releasing you, enslave myself.

Zar. Such favours, so conferr'd, tho' when unsought ;
Deserve acknowledg'ment from noble minds.
Such thanks, as one hating to be oblig'd——
Yet hating more ingratitude, can pay,
I offer.

King. Born to excel, and to command !
As by transcendent beauty to attract
All eyes, so by preheminance of soul
To rule all hearts.

Garcia, what's he, who with contracted brow,
[Beholding *Osmyrn* as they unbind him.
And sullen port, glooms downwards with his eyes ;
At once regardless of his chains, or liberty ?

Gar. That, Sir, is he of whom I spoke ; that's *Osmyrn*.

King. He answers well the character you gave him.
Whence comes it, valiant *Osmyrn*, that a man
So great in arms, as thou art said to be,
So hardly can endure captivity,
The common chance of war ?

Osmyrn. Because captivity
Has robb'd me of a dear and just revenge.

King. I understand not that.

Osmyrn. I would not have you.

Zar. That gallant Moor in battle lost a friend,
Whom more than life he lov'd ; and the regret,
Of not revenging on his foes that loss,
Has caus'd this melancholy and despair.

King. She does excuse him ; 'tis as I suspected.

[To *Gonf.*

Gonf. That friend may be herself ; seem not to heed
His arrogant reply : she looks concern'd.

King. I'll have enquiry made ; perhaps his friend
Yet lives, and is a prisoner. His name ?

Zar. Heli,

King. Garcia, that search shall be your care :

It shall be mine to pay devotion here ;

At this fair shrine to lay my laurels down,

And raise love's altar on the spoils of war.

Conquest and triumph, now, are mine no more ;

Nor will I victory in camps adore :

' For, ling'ring there, in long suspense she stands,

' Shifting the prize in unresolving hands ;

' Unus'd to wait, I broke through her delay,

' Fix'd her by force, and snatch'd the doubtful day.

' Now late I find that war is but her sport ;

' In love the goddess keeps her awful court ;'

Fickle in fields, unsteadily she flies,

But rules with settled sway in Zara's eyes.

[*Exit.*]

The END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE, representing the isle of a temple.

' Garcia, Heli, Perez.

' GARCIA.

' THIS way, we're told, Osmyn was seen to walk ;

' Choosing this lonely mansion of the dead,

' To mourn, brave Heli, thy mistaken fate.

' *Heli.* Let heav'n with thunder to the centre strike me,

' If to arise in very deed from death,

' And to revisit with my long-clos'd eyes

' This living light, cou'd to my soul or sense

' Afford a thought, or shew a glimpse of joy,

' In least proportion to the vast delight

' I feel, to hear of Osmyn's name ; to hear

' That Osmyn lives, and I again shall see him.

' *Gar.* I've heard, with admiration, of your friendship.

' *Per.* Yonder, my lord, behold the noble Moor.

' *Hel.* Where ? Where ?

' *Gar.* I saw him not, nor any like him——

' *Per.* I saw him when I spoke, thwarting my view,

' And striding with distemper'd haste ; his eyes

' Seem'd flame, and flash'd upon me with a glance ;

' Then

- ' Then forward shot their fires which he pursu'd,
 ' As to some object frightful, yet not fear'd.
 ' *Gar.* Let's haste to follow him, and know the cause.
 ' *Hel.* My lord, let me intreat you to forbear:
 ' Leave me alone, to find and cure the cause.
 ' I know his melancholy, and such starts
 ' Are usual to his temper. It might raise him
 ' To act some violence upon himself,
 ' So to be caught in an unguarded hour,
 ' And when his soul gives all her passions way,
 ' Secure and loose in friendly solitude.
 ' I know his noble heart would burst with shame,
 ' To be surpriz'd by strangers in its frailty.
 ' *Gar.* Go, generous Heli, and relieve your friend.
 ' Far be it from me, officiously to pry
 ' Or press upon the privacies of others.

[*Exit Heli.*]

- ' Perez, the king expects from our return
 ' To have his jealousy confirm'd, or clear'd,
 ' Of that appearing love which Zara bears
 ' To Osmyn; but some other opportunity
 ' Must make that plain.
 ' *Per.* To me 'twas long since plain,
 ' And ev'ry look from him and her confirms it.
 ' *Gar.* If so, unhappiness attends their love,
 ' And I could pity 'em. I hear some coming.
 ' The friends, perhaps, are met; let us avoid 'em.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Almeria and Leonora.

Alm. It was a fancy'd noise, for all is hush'd.

Leon. It bore the accent of a human voice.

Alm. It was thy fear, or else some transient wind
 Whistling through hollows of this vaulted isle.

We'll listen——

Leon. Hark!

Alm. No, all is hush'd, and still as death—'tis dread-
 How reverend is the face of this tall pile, [ful!
 Whose antient pillars rear their marble heads,
 To bear aloft its arch'd and pond'rous roof,
 By its own weight made stedfast and immoveable,
 Looking tranquility. It strikes an awe
 And terror on my aking sight; the tombs

And

And monumental caves of death look cold,
 And shoot a chilness to my trembling heart.
 Give me thy hand, and let me hear thy voice;
 Nay, quickly speak to me, and let me hear
 Thy voice—my own affrights me with its echoes.

Leon. Let us return; the horror of this place
 And silence will increase your melancholy.

Alm. It may my fears, but cannot add to that.
 No, I will on; shew me Anselmo's tomb,
 Lead me o'er bones and skulls, and mould'ring earth
 Of human bodies; for I'll mix with them,
 Or wind me in the shroud of some pale corse
 Yet green in earth, rather than be the bride
 Of Garcia's more detested bed: that thought
 Exerts my spirit; and my present fears
 Are lost in dread of greater ill. Then shew me,
 Lead me, for I am bolder grown: lead on
 Where I may kneel, and pay my vows again
 To him, to Heav'n, and my Alphonso's soul.

Leon. I go; but Heav'n can tell with what regret.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Heli.

I wander through this maze of monuments,
 Yet cannot find him—Hark! sure 'tis the voice
 Of one complaining—There it sounds—I'll follow it.

[*Exit.*]

*The SCENE opening discovers a place of tombs: one monu-
 ment fronting the view greater than the rest.*

Enter Almeria and Leonora.

Leon. Behold the sacred vault, within whose womb
 The poor remains of good Anselmo rest,
 Yet fresh and unconsum'd by time or worms.
 What do I see? Oh, heav'n! either my eyes
 Are false, or still the marble door remains
 Unclos'd; the iron gates, that lead to death
 Beneath, are still wide stretch'd upon their hinge,
 And staring on us with unfolded leaves.

Alm. Sure 'tis the friendly yawn of death for me;
 And that dumb mouth, significant in show,
 Invites me to the bed, where I alone
 Shall rest; shews me the grave, where nature, weary

And

And long oppress'd with woes and bending cares,
 May lay the burden down, and sink in slumbers
 Of peace eternal. ' Death, grim death, will fold
 ' Me in his leaden arms, and press me close
 ' To his cold clayie breast : ' my father then
 Will cease his tyranny ; and Garcia too
 Will fly my pale deformity with loathing.
 My soul, enlarg'd from its vile bonds, will mount,
 And range the starry orbs, and milky ways,
 ' Of that refulgent world, where I shall swim
 ' In liquid light, and float on seas of bliss
 To my Alphonso's soul. Oh, joy too great!
 Oh, extasy of thought ! Help me, Anselmo ;
 Help me, Alphonso ; take me, reach thy hand ;
 To thee, to thee I call, to thee, Alphonso :
 Oh, Alphonso !

Ofmyn ascending from the tomb.

Ofm. Who calls that wretched thing that was Alphonso ?

Alm. Angels, and all the host of Heav'n, support me !

Ofm. Whence is that voice, whose shrillness, from the
 grave,

And growing to his father's shroud, roots up
 Alphonso ?

Alm. Mercy ! Providence ! Oh, speak,
 Speak to it quickly, quickly ; speak to me,
 Comfort me, help me, hold me, hide me, hide me,
 Leonora, in thy bosom, from the light,
 And from my eyes.

Ofm. Amazement and illusion !
 Rivet and nail me where I stand, ye pow'rs,

[Coming forward.]

That motionless I may be still deceiv'd.
 Let me not stir, nor breathe, lest I dissolve
 That tender, lovely form of painted air,
 So like Almeria. Ha ! it sinks, it falls ;
 I'll catch it ere it goes, and grasp her shade.
 'Tis life ! 'tis warm ! 'tis she, 'tis she herself !
 Nor dead, nor shade, but breathing and alive !
 It is Almeria, 'tis, it is my wife !

Enter Heli.

Leon. Alas ! she stirs not yet, nor lifts her eyes ;

He too is fainting—Help me, help me, stranger,
Whoe'er thou art, and lend thy hand to raise
These bodies.

Hel. Ha! 'tis he! and with—Almeria!
Oh, miracle of happiness! Oh, joy
Unhop'd for! does Almeria live!

Ofm. Where is she?
Let me behold and touch her, and be sure
'Tis she; 'shew me her face, and let me feel
' Her lips with mine——'Tis she, I'm not deceiv'd;
' I taste her breath, I warm'd her and am warm'd.'
Look up, Almeria, bless me with thy eyes;
Look on thy love, thy lover, and thy husband.

Alm. I've sworn I'll not wed Garcia: why d'ye force
Is this a father? [me.]

Ofm. Look on thy Alphonso.
Thy father is not here, my love, nor Garcia:
Nor am I what I seem, but thy Alphonso.
' Wilt thou not know me?' Hast thou then forgot me?
' Hast thou thy eyes, yet canst not see Alphonso?'
Am I so alter'd, or art thou so chang'd,
That seeing my disguise, thou seest not me?

Alm. It is, it is Alphonso; 'tis his face,
His voice, I know him now, I know him all.
' Oh, take me to thy arms, and bear me hence,
' Back to the bottom of the boundless deep,
' To seas beneath, where thou so long hast dwelt.
Oh! how hast thou returned? How hast thou charm'd
The wildness of the waves and rocks to this?
That thus relenting they have giv'n thee back
To earth, to light and life, to love and me.

Ofm. Oh, I'll not ask, nor answer how, or why
We both have backward trod the paths of fate,
To meet again in life; to know I have thee,
Is knowing more than any circumstance,
Or means, by which I have thee——
To fold thee thus, to press thy balmy lips,
And gaze upon thy eyes, is so much joy,
I have not leisure to reflect, or know,
Or trifle time in thinking.

Alm. Stay a while——
Let me look on thee yet a little more.

‘ *Ofm.* What wouldst thou? thou dost put me from thee.

‘ *Alm.* Yes.

‘ *Ofm.* And why? What dost thou mean? Why dost thou gaze so?

‘ *Alm.* I know not; ’tis to see thy face, I think—

It is too much! too much to bear and live!

To see thee thus again is such profusion

Of joy, of bliss—I cannot bear—I must

Be mad—I cannot be transported thus.

Ofm. Thou excellence, thou joy, thou heav’n of love!

Alm. Where hast thou been? and how art thou alive?

‘ How is all this? All-pow’rful Heav’n, what are we?’

‘ Oh, my strain’d heart—let me again behold thee,

‘ For I weep to see thee—Art thou not paler?’

‘ Much, much; how thou art chang’d!

‘ *Ofm.* Not in my love.

‘ *Alm.* No, no, thy griefs, I know, have done this to thee.

‘ Thou hast wept much, Alphonso; and, I fear,

‘ Too much, too tenderly, lamented me.

‘ *Ofm.* Wrong not my love, to say too tenderly.

‘ No more, my life; talk not of tears or grief;

‘ Affliction is no more, now thou art found.

‘ Why dost thou weep, and hold thee from my arms,

‘ My arms which ake to fold thee fast, and grow

‘ To thee with twining? Come, come to my heart.

‘ *Alm.* I will, for I should never look enough.

‘ They would have marry’d me; but I had sworn

‘ To Heav’n and thee, and sooner would have dy’d—

‘ *Ofm.* Perfection of all faithfulness and love!

‘ *Alm.* Indeed I wou’d—Nay, I wou’d tell thee all,

‘ If I could speak; how I have mourn’d and pray’d:

‘ For I have pray’d to thee, as to a faint;

‘ And thou hast heard my pray’r; for thou art come

‘ To my distress, to my despair, which Heav’n

‘ Could only, by restoring thee, have cur’d.

‘ *Ofm.* Grant me but life, good Heav’n, but length of days,

‘ To pay some part, some little of this debt,

‘ This countless sum of tenderness and love,

‘ For which I stand engag’d to this all excellence:

‘ Then

‘ Then bear me in a whirlwind to my fate,
 ‘ Snatch me from life, and cut me short unwarn’d :
 ‘ Then, then ’twill be enough—I shall be old,
 ‘ I shall have liv’d beyond all æras then
 ‘ Of yet unmeasur’d time ; when I have made
 ‘ This exquisite, this most amazing goodness,
 ‘ Some recompence of love and matchless truth.
 ‘ *Alm.* ’Tis more than recompence to see thy face ;
 ‘ If Heav’n is greater joy it is no happiness,
 ‘ For ’tis not to be borne—What shall I say ?
 ‘ I have a thousand things to know and ask,
 ‘ And speak—That thou art here beyond all hope,
 ‘ All thought ; that all at once thou art before me,
 ‘ And with such suddenness hast hit my sight,
 ‘ Is such surprise, such mystery, such extasy,
 ‘ It hurries all my soul, and stuns my sense.’

Sure from thy father’s tomb thou didst arise ?

Ofm. I did ; and thou, my love, didst call me ; thou.

Alm. True ; but how can’st thou there ? Wert thou alone ?

Ofm. I was, and lying on my father’s lead,
 When broken echoes of a distant voice
 Disturb’d the sacred silence of the vault,
 In murmurs round my head. I rose and listen’d,
 And thought I heard thy spirit call Alphonso ;
 I thought I saw thee too ; but, Oh, I thought not
 That I indeed should be so blest to see thee——

Alm. But still, how cam’st thou thither ? How thus ?
 ——Ha !

What’s he, who, like thyself, is started here
 Ere seen ?

Ofm. Where ? Ha ! what do I see, Antonio !
 I’m fortunate indeed——my friend too, safe !

Heli. Most happily, in finding you thus blest’d.

Alm. More miracles ! Antonio too, escap’d !

Ofm. And twice escap’d ; both from the rage of seas
 And war : for in the fight I saw him fall,

Heli. But fell unhurt, a pris’ner as yourself,
 And as yourself made free ; hither I came,
 Impatiently to seek you, where I knew
 Your grief would lead you to lament Anselmo,

‘ *Omf.* There are no wonders, or else all is wonder.

‘ *Heli.* I saw you on the ground, and rais’d you up,
‘ When with astonishment I saw Almeria.

‘ *Osm.* I saw her too, and therefore saw not thee.

‘ *Alm.* Nor I ; nor could I, for my eyes were yours.

Osm. What means the bounty of all-gracious Heav’n,
That persevering still, with open hand,
It scatters good, as in a waste of mercy !

Where will this end ? But Heav’n is infinite

In all, and can continue to bestow,

When scanty number shall be spent in telling.

Leon. Or I’m deceiv’d, or I beheld the glimpse
Of two in shining habits cross the isle ;

Who by their pointing, seem to mark this place.

Alm. Sure I have dreamt, if we must part so soon.

Osm. I wish at least our parting were a dream,
Or we could sleep ’till we again were met.

Heli. Zara with Selim, Sir, I saw and know ’em :
You must be quick, for love will lend her wings.

Alm. What love ? Who is she ? Why are you alarm’d ?

Osm. She’s the reverse of thee ; she’s my unhappiness.
Harbour no thought that may disturb thy peace ;

‘ But gently take thyself away, lest she

‘ Should come, and see the straining of my eyes

‘ To follow thee.’

Retire, my love, I’ll think how we may meet

To part no more ; my friend will tell thee all ;

How I escap’d, how I am here, and thus ;

How I’m not call’d Alphonso now, but Osmyn ;

And he Heli. All, all he will unfold,

Ere next we meet——

Alm. Sure we shall meet again——

Osm. We shall ; we part not but to meet again.

Gladness and warmth of ever-kindling love

Dwell with thee, and revive thy heart in absence.

[*Exeunt Alm. Leon. and Heli.*

Yet I behold her—yet—and now no more.

Turn your lights inward, eyes, and view my thoughts,

So shall you still behold her—’twill not be.

‘ Oh, impotence of sight ! Mechanic sense !

‘ Which to exterior objects ow’st thy faculty,

‘ Not seeing of election, but necessity.

' Thus do our eyes, as do all common mirrors,
 ' Successively reflect succeeding images :
 ' Not what they would, but must ; a star, or toad ;
 ' Just as the hand of chance administers.
 ' Not so the mind, whose undetermin'd view
 ' Revolves, and to the present adds the past :
 ' Eflaying farther to futurity ;
 ' But that in vain. I have Almeria here
 ' At once, as I before have seen her often—

Enter Zara and Selim.

Zar. See where he stands, folded and fix'd to earth,
 Stiff'ning in thought, a statue among statues.

Why, cruel Osmyrn, dost thou fly me thus ?

' Is it well done ? Is this then the return
 ' For fame, for honour, and for empire lost ?
 ' But what is loss of honour, fame, and empire ?
 ' Is this the recompence reserv'd for love ?
 ' Why, dost thou leave my eyes, and fly my arms,
 ' To find this place of horror and obscurity ?

Am I more loathsome to thee than the grave,
 That thou dost seek to shield thee there, and shun
 My love ? But to the grave I'll follow thee—

He looks not, minds not, hears not ; barb'rous man !

Am I neglected thus ? Am I despis'd ?

Not hear'd ! Ungrateful Osmyrn !

Osmyrn. Ha, 'tis Zara !

Zar. Yes, traitor ; Zara, lost, abandon'd Zara,
 Is a regardless suppliant, now, to Osmyrn.

The slave, the wretch that she redeem'd from death,
 Disdains to listen now, or look on Zara.

Osmyrn. Far be the guilt of such reproaches from me ;
 Lost in myself, and blinded by my thoughts,
 I saw you not till now.

Zar. Now then you see me—
 But with such dumb and thankless eyes you look,
 Better I was unseen, than seen thus coldly.

Osmyrn. What would you from a wretch who came to
 mourn,

And only for his sorrows chose this solitude ?
 Look round ; joy is not here, nor chearfulness.
 You have pursu'd misfortune to its dwelling,
 Yet look for gaiety and gladness there.

Zar. Inhuman ! Why, why dost thou rack me thus ?
 And, with perverseness, from the purpose, answer ?
 What is't to me, this house of misery ?
 What joy do I require ? If thou dost mourn,
 I come to mourn with thee, to share thy griefs,
 And give thee, for 'em, in exchange, my love.

Ofm. Oh, that's the greatest grief—I am so poor,
 I have not wherewithal to give again.

Zar. Thou hast a heart, tho' 'tis a savage one ;
 Give it me as it is ; I ask no more.
 For all I've done, and all I have endur'd :
 For saving thee, when I beheld thee first,
 Driv'n by the tide upon my country's coast,
 Pale and expiring, drench'd in briny waves,
 Thou and thy friend, till my compassion found thee ;
 Compassion ! scarce will't own that name, so soon,
 So quickly, was it love ; for thou wert godlike
 E'en then. Kneeling on earth, I loos'd my hair,
 And with it dry'd thy wat'ry cheeks, then chaf'd
 Thy temples, till reviving blood arose,
 And, like the morn, vermilion'd o'er thy face.
 Oh, Heav'n ! how did my heart rejoice and ake,
 When I beheld the day-break of thy eyes,
 And felt the balm of thy respiring lips !

Ofm. Oh, call not to my mind what you have done ;
 ' It sets a debt of that account before me,
 ' Which shews me poor and bankrupt even in hopes.

Zar. ' The faithful Selim, and my women, know
 ' The danger which I tempted to conceal you.
 ' You know how I abus'd the cred'lous king ;
 ' What arts I us'd to make you pass on him,
 ' When he receiv'd you as the prince of Fez ;
 ' And as my kinsman, honour'd and advanc'd you.'

Oh ! why do I relate what I have done ?
 What did I not ? Was't not for you this war
 Commenc'd ? Not knowing who you were, nor why
 You hated Manuel, I urg'd my husband
 To this invasion ; where he late was lost,
 Where all is lost, and I am made a slave.

* *Osmin.* You pierce my soul—I own it all—But while
The power is wanting to repay such benefits,
'Tis treble anguish to a generous heart.

Zara. Repay me with thy heart—What, dost thou start?
Make no reply! Is this thy gratitude?

Look on me now, from empire fall'n to slavery;
Think on my suff'rings first, then look on me;
Think on the cause of all, then view thyself:
Reflect on *Osmin*, and then look on *Zara*,
The fall'n, the lost, and now the captive *Zara*,
And now abandon'd——Say, what then is *Osmin*?

Osmin. A fatal wretch—A huge, stupendous ruin,
That tumbling on its prop, crush'd all beneath,
And bore contiguous palaces to earth.

Zara. Yet thus, thus fall'n, thus levell'd with the vilest,
If I have gain'd thy love, 'tis glorious ruin;
Ruin! 'tis still to reign, and to be more
A queen; for what are riches, empire, power,
But larger means to gratify the will?
The steps on which we tread, to rise and reach
Our wish; and that obtain'd, down with the scaffolding
Of sceptres, crowns, and thrones; they've serv'd their
And are, like lumber, to be left and scorn'd. [end,

Osmin. Why was I made the instrument to throw
In bonds the frame of this exalted mind?

Zara. We may be free; the conqueror is mine;
In chains unseen I hold him by the heart,
And can unwind and strain him as I please.
Give me thy love, I'll give thee liberty.

Osmin. In vain you offer, and in vain require
What neither can bestow. Set free yourself,
And leave a slave the wretch that would be so.

Zara. Thou canst not mean so poorly as thou talk'st.

Osmin. Alas! you know me not.

Zara. Not who thou art:
But what this last ingratitude declares,
'This groveling baseness—Thou say'st true, I know
'Thee not; for what thou art yet wants a name:

* The lines printed in Italics are not in the original, but are now given to the reader as delivered in the representation at Drury-lane Theatre.

By something so unworthy and so vile,
 That to have lov'd thee makes me yet more lost,
 Than all the malice of my other fate.
 Traitor, monster, cold perfidious slave;
 A slave not daring to be free; nor dares
 To love above him; for 'tis dangerous.
 'Tis that, I know; for thou dost look, with eyes
 Sparkling desire, and trembling to possess.
 I know my charms have reach'd thy very soul,
 And thrill'd thee through with darting fires; but thou
 Dost fear so much, thou dar'st not wish.' The king!
 There, there's the dreadful sound, the king's thy rival!

Sel. Madam, the king is here, and entering now.

Zara. As I could wish; by Heav'n I'll be reveng'd.

Enter the King, Perez, and attendants.

King. Why does the fairest of her kind withdraw
 Her shining from the day, to gild this scene
 Of death and night? Ha! what disorder's this?
 Somewhat I heard of king and rival mention'd.
 What's he that dares be rival to the king,
 Or lift his eyes to like where I adore? [slave.]

Zara. There, he, your prisoner, and that was my
King. How? better than my hopes! Does she accuse
 him? [Aside.]

Zara. Am I become so low by my captivity,
 And do your arms so lessen what they conquer,
 That Zara must be made the sport of slaves?
 And shall the wretch, whom yester sun beheld
 Waiting my nod, the creature of my pow'r,
 Presume to-day to plead audacious love,
 And build bold hopes on my dejected fate?

King. Better for him to tempt the rage of Heav'n,
 And wrench the bolt red-hissing from the hand
 Of him that thunders, than but to think that insolence.
 'Tis daring for a god. Hence to the wheel
 With that Ixion, who aspires to hold
 Divinity embrac'd; to whips and prisons
 Drag him with speed, and rid me of his face.

[Guards seize Ofmyn, and exeunt.]

Zara. Compassion led me to bemoan his state,
 Whose former fate had merited much more:

And, through my hopes in you, I undertook
He should be set at large; thence sprung his insolence,
And what was charity, he constru'd love.

King. Enough; his punishment be what you please.
But let me lead you from this place of sorrow,
To one where young delights attend, 'and joys,
' Yet new, unborn, and blooming in the bud,
' Which wait to be full-blown at your approach,
' And spread, like roses, to the morning sun:'
Where ev'ry hour shall roll in circling joys,
And love shall wing the tedious-waiting day.
Life, without love, is load; and time stands still:
What we refuse to him, to death we give;
And then, then only, when we love, we live. [*Exeunt.*]

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE, *a prison.*

OSMYN, with a paper.

BUT now, and I was clos'd within the tomb
That holds my father's ashes; and but now,
Where he was pris'ner, I am too imprison'd.
Sure 'tis the hand of Heav'n that leads me thus,
And for some purpose points out these remembrances.
In a dark corner of my cell I found
This paper; what it is this light will shew.

" If my Alphonso" — Ha! [*Reading.*]
" If my Alphonso live, restore him, Heav'n;
" Give me more weight, crush my declining years
" With bolts, with chains, imprisonment and want;
" But bless my son, visit not him for me.

It is his hand; this was his pray'r — yet more:

" Let ev'ry hair, which sorrow by the roots [*Reading.*]
" Tears from my hoary and devoted head,
" Be doubled in thy mercies to my son:
" Not for myself, but him, hear me, all-gracious—

'Tis wanting what should follow—Heav'n shou'd follow,
 But 'tis torn off—Why shou'd that word alone
 Be torn from this petition? 'Twas to Heav'n,
 But Heav'n was deaf, Heav'n heard him not; but thus,
 Thus as the name of Heav'n from this is torn,
 So did it tear the ears of mercy from
 His voice, shutting the gates of pray'r against him.
 If piety be thus debarr'd access
 On high, and of good men the very best
 Is singled out to bleed, and bear the scourge,
 What is reward? Or what is punishment?
 But who shall dare to tax eternal justice!
 Yet I may think——I may, I must; for thought
 Precedes the will to think, and error lives
 Ere reason can be born. 'Reason, the power
 ' To guess at right and wrong, the twinkling lamp
 ' Of wand'ring life, that winks and wakes by turns,
 ' Fooling the follower, betwixt shade and shining.'
 What noise! Who's there? My friend? How can't
 thou hither?

Enter Heli.

Heli. The time's too precious to be spent in telling.
 The captain, influenc'd by Almeria's power,
 Gave order to the guards for my admittance.

Ofm. How does Almeria? But I know she is
 As I am. Tell me, may I hope to see her?

Heli. You may. Anon, at midnight, when the king
 Is gone to rest, and Garcia is retir'd,
 • (Who takes the privilege to visit late,
 ' Presuming on a bridegroom's right)' she'll come.

Ofm. She'll come; 'tis what I wish, yet what I fear.
 She'll come; but whither, and to whom? Oh, Heav'n!
 To a vile prison, and a captive wretch;
 To one, whom, had she never known, she had
 Been happy. Why, why was that heav'nly creature
 Abandon'd o'er to love what Heav'n forsakes?
 Why does she follow, with unwearied steps,
 One, who has tir'd misfortune with pursuing?
 • One driven about the world, like blasted leaves
 • And chaff, the sport of adverse winds; 'till late,

' At

‘ At length imprison’d in some cleft of rock,
 ‘ On earth it rests, and rots to silent dust.’

Heli. Have hopes, and hear the voice of better fate.
 I’ve learn’d there are disorders ripe for mutiny
 Among the troops, who thought to share the plunder,
 Which Manuel to his own use and avarice
 Converts. This news has reach’d Valentia’s frontiers,
 Where many of your subjects, long oppress’d
 With tyranny, and grievous impositions,
 Are risen in arms, and call for chiefs to head
 And lead them to regain their rights and liberty.

Os. By Heav’n thou’st rous’d me from my lethargy,
 The spirit which was deaf to my own wrongs,
 And the loud cries of my dead father’s blood,
 ‘ Deaf to revenge—nay, which refus’d to hear
 ‘ The piercing sighs and murmurs of my love
 ‘ Yet unenjoy’d; what not Almeria could
 ‘ Revive or raise,’ my people’s voice has waken’d.

Heli. Our posture of affairs, and scanty time
 My lord, require you should compose yourself.

Os. Oh, my Antonio! I am all on fire;
 My soul is up in arms, ready to charge
 And bear amidst the foe with conqu’ring troops.
 I hear ’em call to lead ’em on to liberty,
 To victory; their shouts and clamours rend
 My ears, and reach the Heav’ns. Where is the king?
 Where is Alphonso? Ha! where? where indeed?
 Oh, I could tear and burst the strings of life,
 To break these chains. Off, off, ye stains of royalty;
 Off, slavery. Oh, curse! that I alone
 Can beat and flutter in my cage, when I
 Would soar and stoop at victory beneath.

Heli. *Abate this ardour, Sir, or we are lost.*
 Zara, the cause of your restraint, may be
 The means of liberty restor’d. That gain’d,
 Occasion will not fail to point out ways
 For your escape. Mean-time, I’ve thought already
 With speed and safety to convey myself,
 Where not far off some malcontents hold council
 Nightly, who hate this tyrant; some, who love

Anselmo's memory, and will, for certain,
When they shall know you live, assist your cause.

Ofm. My friend and counsellor, as thou think'st fit,
So do. I will, with patience, wait my fortune.

Heli. When Zara comes, abate of your aversion.

Ofm. I hate her not, nor can dissemble love :
But as I may I'll do. ' I have a paper
' Which I would shew thee, friend, but that the sight
' Would hold thee here, and clog thy expedition.
' Within I found it, by my father's hand
' 'Twas writ ; a pray'r for me, wherein appears
' Paternal love prevailing o'er his sorrows ;
' Such sanctity, such tendernefs, so mix'd
' With grief, as would draw tears from inhumanity.
' *Heli.* The care of Providence sure left it there,
' To arm your mind with hope. Such piety
' Was never heard in vain. Heav'n has in store
' For you those blessings it withheld from him.
' In that assurance live ; which time, I hope,
' And our next meeting will confirm.

Ofm. Farewel,
My friend ; the good thou dost deserve, attend thee.

[*Exit Heli.*

I've been to blame, and question'd with impiety
The care of Heav'n. Not so my father bore
More anxious grief. This should have better taught me ;
' This lesson, in some hour of inspiration
' By him set down, when his pure thoughts were borne,
' Like fumes of sacred incense o'er the clouds,
' And wafted thence, on angel's wings, thro' ways
' Of light, to the bright source of all. For there
' He in the book of prescience saw this day ;
' And waking to the world and mortal sense,
' Left this example of his resignation,
This his last legacy to me : which, here,
I'll treasure as more worth than diadems,
Or all extended rule of regal pow'r.

Enter Zara, veil'd.

Ofm. What brightness breaks upon me thus through
And promises a day to this dark dwelling ? [shades,
Is it my love ?—

Zara.

Zara. Oh, that thy heart had taught [*Lifting her veil.*
Thy tongue that saying !

Os. *Zara!* I am betray'd by my surprize.

Zara. What, does my face displease thee?
That, having seen it, thou dost turn thy eyes
Away, as from deformity and horror ?

If so, this sable curtain shall again
Be drawn, and I will stand before thee, seeing,
And unseen. Is it my love ? Ask again
That question ; speak again in that soft voice ;
And look again with wishes in thy eyes.

Oh, no ! thou canst not, for thou seest me now,
As she whose savage breast hath been the cause
Of these thy wrongs ; as she whose barb'rous rage
Has loaded thee with chains and galling irons.

• Well dost thou scorn me, and upbraid my falseness ;
• Could one who lov'd, thus torture whom she lov'd ?
• No, no, it must be hatred, dire revenge,
• And detestation, that could use thee thus.
• So dost thou think ; then do but tell me so ;
• Tell me, and thou shalt see how I'll revenge
• Thee on this false one, how I'll stab and tear
• This heart of flint, 'till it shall bleed ; and thou
• Shalt weep for mine, forgetting thy own miseries."

Os. You wrong me, beauteous *Zara*, to believe
I bear my fortunes with so low a mind,

• As still to meditate revenge on all
• Whom chance, or fate, working by secret causes,
• Has made, per-force, subservient to the end]
• The heav'nly pow'rs allot me ;' no, not you,
But destiny and inauspicious stars
Have cast me down to this low being. Or
Granting you had, from you I have deserv'd it.

Zara. Canst thou forgive me then ? wilt thou believe
So kindly of my fault, to call it madness ?
Oh, give that madness yet a milder name,
And call it passion ! then, be still more kind,
And call that passion love.

Os. Give it a name,
Or being, as you please, such I will think it.

Zara. Oh, thou dost wound me more with this thy good-
Than

[ness,
Than

Than e'er thou couldst with bitterest reproaches ;
Thy anger could not pierce thus to my heart.

Os. Yet I could wish——

Zara. Hasten me to know it ; what ?

Os. That at this time I had not been this thing.

Zara. What thing ?

Os. This slave.

Zara. Oh, Heav'n my fears interpret

This thy silence ; somewhat of high concern,
Long fashioning within thy labouring mind,
And now just ripe for birth, my rage has ruin'd.
Have I done this ? Tell me, am I so curs'd ?

Os. Time may have still one fated hour to come,
Which, wing'd with liberty, might overtake
Occasion past.

Zara. Swift as occasion, I

Myself will fly ; and earlier than the morn,
Wake thee to freedom. ' Now 'tis late ; and yet
' Some news few minutes past, arriv'd, which seem'd
' To shake the temper of the king—Who knows
' What racking cares disease a monarch's bed ?
' Or love, that late at night still lights his lamp,
' And strikes his rays thro' dusk and folded lids,
' Forbidding rest, may stretch his eyes awake,
' And force their balls abroad at this dead hour.
' I'll try.

Os. I have not merited this grace ;
Nor, should my secret purpose take effect,
Can I repay, as you require, such benefits.

Zara. Thou canst not owe me more, nor have I more
To give, than I've already lost. But now,
So does the form of our engagements rest,
Thou hast the wrong till I redeem thee hence ;
That done, I leave thy justice to return
My love. Adieu.

[*Exit.*

Os. This woman has a soul
Of godlike mould, intrepid and commanding,
And challenges, in spite of me, my best
Esteem ; ' to this, she's fair, few more can boast
' Of personal charms, or with less vanity
' Might hope to captivate the hearts of kings ;'

But

But she has passions which outstrip the wind,
 And tear her virtues up, as tempests root
 The sea. I fear, when she shall know the truth,
 Some swift and dire event of her blind rage
 Will make all fatal. But behold, she comes
 For whom I fear, to shield me from my fears,
 The cause and comfort of my boding heart.

Enter Almeria.

My life, my health, my liberty, my all!
 How shall I welcome thee to this sad place?
 How speak to thee the words of joy and transport?
 How run into thy arms, withheld by fetters;
 Or take thee into mine, while I'm thus manacled
 And pinion'd like a thief or murderer?
 Shall I not hurt or bruise thy tender body,
 And stain thy bosom with the rust of these
 Rude irons? Must I meet thee thus, Almeria?

Alm. Thus, thus; we parted, thus to meet again.
 Thou told'st me thou would'st think how we might meet
 To part no more—Now we will part no more;
 For these thy chains, or death, shall join us ever.

Osm. Hard means to ratify thy word!—Oh, cruelty!
 ' That ever I should think beholding thee
 ' A torture!—Yet, such is the bleeding anguish
 ' Of my heart, to see thy sufferings—Oh, Heav'n!
 ' That I could almost turn my eyes away,
 ' Or wish thee from my sight.

Alm. Oh, say not so!
 ' Tho' 'tis because thou lov'st me. Do not say,
 ' On any terms, that thou dost wish me from thee.
 ' No, no, 'tis better thus, that we together
 ' Feed on each other's heart, devour our woes
 ' With mutual appetite; and mingling in
 ' One cup the common stream of both our eyes,
 ' Drink bitter draughts, with never-slaking thirst;
 ' Thus better, than for any cause to part.
 ' What dost thou think? Look not so tenderly
 ' Upon me—speak, and take me in thy arms—
 ' Thou canst not; thy poor arms are bound, and strive
 ' In vain with thy remorseless chains, which gnaw
 ' And eat into thy flesh, fest'ring thy limbs
 ' With rankling rust.'

Osm.

Os. Oh! O——

Alm. Give me that sigh.

Why dost thou heave, and stifle in thy griefs?
Thy heart will burst, thy eyes look red, and start;
Give thy soul way, and tell me thy dark thought.

Os. For this world's rule, I would not wound thy breast
With such a dagger as then stuck my heart.

Alm. Why? why? To know it, cannot wound me more
Than knowing thou hast felt it. Tell it me,
—Thou giv'st me pain with too much tenderness.

Os. And thy excessive love distracts my sense.
Oh, wouldst thou be less killing, soft, or kind,
Grief could not double thus his darts against me.

Alm. Thou dost me wrong, and grief too robs my
If there he shoot not every other shaft; [heart,
Thy second self shou'd feel each other wound,
And woe should be in equal portions dealt.
I am thy wife—

Os. Oh, thou hast search'd too deep:
There, there I bleed; there pull the cruel cords,
That strain my cracking nerves; engines and wheels,
That piece-meal grind, are beds of down and balm
To that soul-racking thought.

Alm. Then I am curs'd
Indeed, if that be so; if I'm thy torment,
Kill me, then, kill me, dash me with thy chains,
Tread on me: 'What, am I the bosom-snake
' That sucks thy warm life-blood, and gnaws thy heart;
' Oh, that thy words had force to break those bonds,
' As they have strength to tear this heart in sunder;
' So shou'dst thou be at large from all oppression.'
Am I, am I of all thy woes the worst?

Os. My all of bliss, my everlasting life,
Soul of my soul, and end of all my wishes,
Why dost thou thus unman me with thy words,
' And melt me down to mingle with thy weepings?
' Why dost thou ask? Why dost thou talk thus piercingly?'
Thy sorrows have disturb'd thy peace of mind,
And thou dost speak of miseries impossible.

Alm. Didst not thou say that racks and wheels were
balm
And beds of ease, to thinking me thy wife?

Osm. No, no; nor shou'd the subtlest pains that hell
 Or hell-born malice can invent, extort
 A wish or thought from me to have thee other.
 But thou wilt know what harrows up my heart:
 Thou art my wife——nay, thou art yet my bride——
 The sacred union of connubial love
 Yet unaccomplish'd: 'his mysterious rites
 ' Delay'd; nor has our hymeneal torch
 ' Yet lighted up his last most grateful sacrifice;
 ' But dash'd with rain from eyes, and swal'd with sighs,
 ' Burns dim, and glimmers with expiring light.'
 Is this dark cell a temple for that god?
 Or this vile earth an altar for such offerings?
 This den for slaves, this dungeon damp'd with woes;
 ' Is this our marriage bed? are these our joys?'
 Is this to call thee mine? Oh, hold, my heart!
 To call thee mine? Yes; thus even thus to call
 Thee mine, were comfort, joy, extremest extasy.
 But, Oh, thou art not mine, not e'en in misery;
 And 'tis deny'd to me to be so bless'd,
 As to be wretched with thee.

Alm. No; not that
 Th' extremest malice of our fate can hinder:
 That still is left us, and on that we'll feed,
 As on the leavings of calamity.
 There we will feast and smile on past distress,
 And hug, in scorn of it, or mutual ruin.

Osm. Oh, thou dost talk, my love, as one resolv'd,
 Because not knowing danger. But look forward;
 Think of to-morrow, when thou shalt be torn
 From these weak, struggling, unextended arms:
 Think how my heart will heave, and eyes will strain,
 To grasp and reach what is deny'd my hands:
 ' Think how the blood will start, and tears will gush,
 ' To follow thee, my separating soul.'
 Think how I am, when thou shalt wed with Garcia!
 Then will I smear these walls with blood, disfigure
 And dash my face, and rive my clotted hair,
 Break on this flinty floor my throbbing breast,
 And grovel with gash'd hands to scratch a grave,
 ' Stripping my nails to tear this pavement up,'
 And bury me alive.

Alm. Heart-breaking horror!

Ofm. Then Garcia shall lie panting on thy bosom,
Luxurious, revelling amidst thy charms;
'And thou per-force must yield, and aid his transport.'
Hell! Hell! have I not cause to rage and rave?
What are all racks, and wheels, and whips to this?
'Are they not soothing softness, sinking ease,
'And wafting air to this?' Oh, my Almeria!
What do the damn'd endure, but to despair,
But knowing Heav'n, to know it lost for ever?

Alm. Oh, I am struck; thy words are bolts of ice,
Which shot into my breast, now melt and chill me.
'I chatter, shake, and faint with thrilling fears.
'No, hold me not——Oh, let us not support,
'But sink each other, deeper yet, down, down,
'Where levell'd low, no more we'll lift our eyes,
'But prone, and dumb, rot the firm face of earth
'With rivers of incessant scalding rain.'

Enter Zara, Perez, Selim.

Zar. Somewhat of weight to me requires his freedom?
Dare you dispute the king's command? Behold
The royal signet.

Per. I obey; yet beg
Your majesty one moment to defer
Your ent'ring, 'till the princess is return'd
From visiting the noble prisoner.

Zar. Ha!
What say'st thou?

Ofm. We are lost! undone! discover'd!
'Retire, my life, with speed——Alas, we're seen.'
Speak of compassion, let her hear you speak
Of interceding for me with the king;
Saying something quickly to conceal our loves,
If possible——

Alm.——I cannot speak.

Ofm. Let me
Conduct you forth, as not perceiving her,
But till she's gone; then bless me thus again.

Zar. Trembling and weeping as he leads her forth!
Confusion in his face, and grief in hers!
'Tis plain I've been abus'd——' Death and destruction!
'How shall I search into this mystery?'

40 THE MOURNING BRIDE.

‘ The bluest blast of pestilential air
 ‘ Strike, damp, deaden her charms, and kill his eyes;’
 Perdition catch ’em both, and ruin part ’em.

Osm. This charity to one unknown, and thus
 [Aloud to Almeria as she goes out.

Distress’d, Heav’n will repay; all thanks are poor.
 [Exit Almeria.

Zar. Damn’d, damn’d dissembler! Yet I will be calm,
 Choak in my rage, and know the utmost depth
 Of this deceiver——You seem much surpriz’d.

Osm. At your return so soon and unexpected!

Zara. And so unwish’d, unwanted too it seems.
 Confusion! Yet I will contain myself.
 You’re grown a favourite since last we parted;
 Perhaps I’m saucy and intruding ——

Osm.——Madam!

Zara. I did not know the princess’ favourite.
 Your pardon, Sir——mistake me not; you think
 I’m angry; you’re deceiv’d. I came to set
 You free; but shall return much better pleas’d,
 To find you have an interest superior.

Osm. You do not come to mock my miseries?

Zar. I do.

Osm. I could at this time spare your mirth.

Zar. I know thou couldst; but I’m not often pleas’d.
 And will indulge it now. What miseries?
 Who would not be thus happily confin’d,
 To be the care of weeping majesty;
 To have contending queens, at dead of night,
 Forsake their down, to wake with wat’ry eyes,
 And watch like tapers o’er your hours of rest?
 Oh, curse! I cannot hold——

Osm. Come, ’tis too much.

Zar. Villain!

Osm. How, Madam!

Zar. Thou shalt die.

Osm. I thank you.

Zar. Thou ly’st, for now I know for whom thou’dst [live.

Osm. Then you may know for whom I die.

Zar. Hell! Hell!

Yet I’ll be calm——Dark and unknown betrayer!

But

But now the dawn begins, and the slow hand
Of Fate is stretch'd to draw the veil, and leave
Thee bare, the naked mark of public view.

Osm. You may be still deceiv'd, 'tis in my pow'r—
Chain'd as I am, to fly from all my wrongs
And free myself, at once, from misery,
And you of me.

Zar. Ha! say'st thou—but I'll prevent it—
Who waits there? As you will answer it, look this
slave [To the guard.

Attempt no means to make himself away.

I've been deceiv'd. The public safety now

Requires he shou'd be more confin'd, and none,

No, not the princess, suffer'd or to see

Or speak with him. I'll quit you to the king.

Vile and ingrate! too late thou shalt repent:

The base injustice thou hast done my love:

Yes, thou shalt know, spite of thy past distress,

And all those ills which thou so long hast mourn'd;

Heav'n has no rage like love to hatred turn'd,

Nor hell a fury like a woman scorn'd. } *Exeunt.*

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT IV.

SCENE, a room of state.

Zara, Selim.

ZARA.

THOU hast already rack'd me with thy stay;

Therefore require me not to ask thee twice;

Reply at once to all. What is concluded?

Sel. Your accusation highly has incens'd:

The king, and were alone enough to urge

The fate of Osmyn; but to that, fresh news

Has since arriv'd, of more revolted troops.

'Tis certain Heli too is fled, and with him

(Which breeds amazement and distraction) some

Who bore high offices of weight and trust,

Both in the state and army. This confirms

The king in full belief of all you told him

Concerning Osmyn, and his correspondence
 With them who first began the mutiny.
 Wherefore a warrant for his death is sign'd ;
 And order given for public execution.

Zar. Ha! haste thee! fly, prevent his fate and mine ;
 Find out the king, tell him I have of weight
 More than his crown t' impart ere Osmyn die.

Sel. It needs not, for the king will straight be here,
 And as to your revenge, not his own int'rest,
 Pretend to sacrifice the life of Osmyn.

Zar. What shall I say? Invent, contrive, advise
 Somewhat to blind the king, and save his life,
 In whom I live. ' Spite of my rage and pride,
 ' I am a woman, and a lover still.
 ' Oh! 'tis more grief but to suppose his death,
 ' Than still to meet the rigour of his scorn.
 ' From my despair my anger had its source ;
 ' When he is dead I must despair for ever.
 ' For ever! that's despair—it was distrust
 ' Before; distrust will ever be in love,
 ' And anger in distrust; both short-liv'd pains.
 ' But in despair, and ever-during death,
 ' No term, no bound, but infinite of woe.
 ' Oh, torment, but to think! what then to bear?
 ' Not to be borne—Devise the means to shun it,
 Quick; or, by Heav'n, this dagger drinks thy blood.

Sel. My life is yours, nor wish I to preserve it,
 But to serve you. I have already thought.

Zar. Forgive my rage; I know thy love and truth.
 But say, what's to be done? or when, or how,
 Shall I prevent or stop th' approaching danger?

Sel. You must still seem most resolute and fix'd
 On Osmyn's death; too quick a change of mercy
 Might breed suspicion of the cause. Advise
 That execution may be done in private.

Zar. On what pretence?

Sel. Your own request's enough.
 However, for a colour, tell him, you
 Have cause to fear his guards may be corrupted,
 And some of them bought off to Osmyn's interest,
 Who at the place of execution will
 Attempt to force his way for an escape;

The state of things will countenance all suspicions.
Then offer to the king to have him strangled
In secret by your mutes; and get an order,
That none but mutes may have admittance to him.
I can no more, the king is here. Obtain
This grant, and I'll acquaint you with the rest.

Enter King, Gonsalez, and Perez.

King. Bear to the dungeon those rebellious slaves,
'Th' ignoble curs, that yelp to fill the cry,
' And spend their mouths in barking tyranny.'
But for their leaders, Sancho and Ramirez,
Let 'em be led away to present death.
Perez, see it perform'd.

Gonsf. Might I presume,
Their execution better were deferr'd,
'Till Osmyn die. Mean time we may learn more
Of this conspiracy.

King. Then be it so.
Stay, soldier; they shall suffer with the Moor.
Are none return'd of those that follow'd Heli?

Gonsf. None, Sir. Some papers have been since discover'd

In Roderigo's house, who fled with him,
Which seem to intimate, as if Alphonso
Were still alive, and arming in Valentia:
Which wears indeed this colour of a truth,
They who are fled have that way bent their course.
Of the same nature divers notes have been
Dispers'd t'amuse the people; whereupon
Some, ready of belief, have rais'd this rumour:
That being sav'd upon the coast of Afric,
He there disclos'd himself to Albucacim,
And by a secret compact made with him,
Open'd and urg'd the way to this invasion;
While he himself, returning to Valentia
In private, undertook to raise this tumult.

Zar. Ha! hear'st thou that? Is Osmyn then Alphonso?
' Oh, heav'n! a thousand things occur at once
' To my remembrance now, that make it plain.'
Oh, certain death for him, as sure despair
For me, if it be known——If not, what hope
Have I? Yet 'twere the lowest baseness now,

To yield him up—No, I will conceal him,
And try the force of yet more obligations.

Gonz. 'Tis not impossible. Yet it may be
That some impostor has usurp'd his name.
Your beauteous captive Zara can inform,
If such an one, so 'scaping, was receiv'd,
At any time in Albucaim's court.

King. Pardon, fair excellence, this long neglect:
An unforeseen, unwelcome hour of business,
Has thrust between us and our while of love;
But wearing now apace with ebbing sand,
Will quickly waste and give again the day.

Zar. You're too secure: the danger is more imminent
Than your high courage suffers you to see;
While Osmyn lives, you are not safe.

King. His doom
Is pass'd, if you revoke it not, he dies.

Zar. 'Tis well. By what I heard upon your entrance,
I find I can unfold what yet concerns
You more. One, who did call himself Alphonso,
Was cast upon my coast, as is reported,
And oft had private conference with the king;
To what effect I knew not then: but he,
Alphonso, secretly departed, just
About the time our arms embark'd for Spain.
What I know more is, that a triple league
Of strictest friendship was profess'd between
Alphonso, Heli, and the traitor Osmyn.

King. Public report is ratify'd in this.

Zar. And Osmyn's death requir'd of strong necessity.

King. Give order strait, that all the pris'ners die.

Zar. Forbear a moment, somewhat more I have
Worthy your private ear, and this your minister.

King. Let all, except Gonzalez, leave the room.

[Exit Perez, &c.]

Zar. I am your captive, and you've us'd me nobly;
And in return of that, tho' otherwise
Your enemy, 'I have discover'd Osmyn
' His private practice and conspiracy
' Against your state: and fully to discharge
' Myself of what I've undertaken, now
I think it fit to tell you, that your guards

Are tainted ; some among 'em have resolv'd
To rescue Osmyn at the place of death.

King. Is treason then so near us as our guards ?

Zar. Most certain ; tho' my knowledge is not yet
So ripe, to point at the particular men.

King. What's to be done ?

Zar. That too I will advise.

I have remaining in my train some mutes,
A present once from the sultana queen,
In the grand signior's court. These from their infancy
Are practic'd in the trade of death ; and shall
(As their custom is) in private strangle
Osmyn.

Gonf. My lord, the queen advises well.

King. What off'ring, or what recompence remains
In me, that can be worthy so great services ?
To cast beneath your feet the crown you've sav'd,
Tho' on the head that wears it, were too little.

Zar. Of that hereafter : but, mean time, 'tis fit
You give strict charge, that none may be admitted
To see the pris'ner, but such mutes as I
Shall send.

King. Who waits there ?

Enter Perez.

King. On your life, take heed
That only Zara's mutes, or such who bring
Her warrant, have admittance to the Moor.

Zar. They, and no other, not the princess' self.

Per. Your majesty shall be obey'd.

King. Retire.

[*Exit Perez.*]

Gonf. That interdiction so particular
Pronounc'd with vehemence against the princess,
Shou'd have more meaning than appears barefac'd.
This king is blinded by his love, and heeds
It not. [*Aside.*]—Your majesty sure might have spar'd
The last restraint : you hardly can suspect
The princess is confed'rate with the Moor.

Zar. I've heard her charity did once extend
So far, to visit him at his request.

Gonf. Ha !

King. How ! She visit Osmyn ! What, my daughter ?

Sel. Madam, take heed ; or you have ruin'd all.

Zar

Zar. And after did solicit you on his
Behalf,——

King. Never. You have been misinform'd.

Zar. Indeed! Then 'twas a whisper spread by some
Who wish'd it so; a common art in courts.
I will retire and instantly prepare
Instruction for my ministers of death.

[*Exit Zara and Selima.*]

Gonf. There's somewhat yet of mystery in this;
Her words and actions are obscure and double,
Sometimes concur, and sometimes disagree:
I like it not.

[*Aside.*]

King. What dost thou think, Gonfalez?
Are we not much indebted to this fair one?

Gonf. I am a little slow of credit, Sir,
In the sincerity of woman's actions.
Methinks this lady's hatred to the Moor
Disquiets her too much; which makes it seem
As if she'd rather that she did not hate him.
I wish her mutes are meant to be employ'd
As she pretends—I doubt it now—Your guards
Corrupted! How? By whom? Who told her so?
I' th' evening Osmyrn was to die; at midnight
She begg'd the royal signet to release him;
I' th' morning he must die again; ere noon
Her mutes alone must strangle him, or he'll
Escape. This put together suits not well.

King. Yet that there's truth in what she has discover'd
Is manifest from every circumstance.

This tumult, and the lords who fled with Heli,
Are confirmation;——that Alphonso lives,
Agrees expressly too with her report.

Gonf. I grant it, Sir; and doubt not, but in rage
Of jealousy, she has discover'd what
She now repents. It may be I'm deceiv'd.
But why that needless caution of the princess?
What if she had seen Osmyrn? Tho' 'twere strange;
But if she had, what was't to her? Unless
She fear'd her stronger charms might cause the Moor's
Affection to revolt.

King. I thank thee, friend.

There's

There's reason in thy doubt, and I am warn'd.—
But think'st thou that my daughter saw this Moor?

Gonf. If Osmyrn be, as Zara has related,
Alphonso's friend, 'tis not impossible
But she might wish, on his account, to see him.

King. Say'st thou? By Heav'n, thou hast rous'd a
thought,

That like a sudden earthquake shakes my frame.
Confusion! then my daughter's an accomplice,
And plots in private with this hellish Moor.

Gonf. That were too hard a thought—but see, she
Twere not amiss to question her a little, [comes—
And try, howe'er, if I've divin'd aright.
If what I fear be true, she'll be concern'd
For Osmyrn's death, as he's Alphonso's friend:
Urge that, to try if she'll solicit for him.

Enter Almeria and Leonora.

King. Your coming has prevented me, Almeria;
I had determin'd to have sent for you.
Let your attendant be dismiss'd; I have [*Leonora retires.*
To talk with you. Come near; why dost thou shake?
What mean those swell'n and red-fleck'd eyes, that look
As they had wept in blood, and worn the night
In waking anguish? Why this on the day
Which was design'd to celebrate thy nuptials;
But that the beams of light are to be stain'd
With reeking gore, from traitors on the rack?
Wherefore I have deferr'd the marriage-rites;
Nor shall the guilty horrors of this day
Prophane that jubilee.

Alm. All days to me
Henceforth are equal: this, the day of death,
To-morrow, and the next, and each that follows
Will undistinguish'd roll, and but prolong
One hated line of more extended woe.

King. Whence is thy grief? Give me to know the
And look thou answer me with truth; for know [*cause;*
I am not unacquainted with thy falshood.
Why art thou mute? Base and degen'rate maid!

Gonf. Dear Madam, speak, or you'll incense the King.

Alm. What is't to speak? Or wherefore should I speak?
What mean these tears but grief unutterable?

King.

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King. They are the dumb confessions of thy guilty mind ;

They mean thy guilt: and say thou wert confed'rate
With damn'd conspirators to take my life.

Oh, impious parricide ! Now canst thou speak ?

Alm. O earth, behold, I kneel upon thy bosom,
And bend my flowing eyes to stream upon
Thy face, imploring thee that thou wilt yield ;
Open thy bowels of compassion, take
Into thy womb the last and most forlorn
Of all thy race. Hear me, thou common parent
— I have no parent else—be thou a mother,
And step between me and the curse of him
Who was—who was, but is no more a father ;
But brands my innocence with horrid crimes ;
And for the tender names of child and daughter,
Now calls me murderer and parricide.

King. Rise, I command thee—and if thou wouldest
Aquit thyself of those detested names,
Swear thou hast never seen that foreign dog,
Now doom'd to die, that most accursed Osmyrn.

Alm. Never, but as with innocence I might,
And free of all bad purposes. So Heaven's
My witness.

King. Vile equivocating wretch !
With innocence ! Oh, patience ! hear—she owns it !
Confesses it ! By Heav'n, I'll have him rack'd,
Torn, mangled, flay'd, impal'd—all pains and tortures
That wit of man and dire revenge can think,
Shall he, accumulated, underbear.

Alm. Oh, I am lost.—There fate begins to wound.

King. Hear me, then ; if thou canst reply ; know,
traitreſs,

I'm not to learn that curs'd Alphonso lives ;
Nor am I ignorant what Osmyrn is——

Alm. Then all is ended, and we both must die.
Since thou'rt reveal'd, alone thou shalt not die.
And yet alone would I have dy'd, Heav'n knows,
Repeated deaths, rather than have reveal'd thee.

' Yes, all my father's wounding wrath, tho' each
' Reproach cuts deeper than the keenest sword,
' And cleaves my heart, I wou'd have borne it all,

' Nay

‘ Nay all the pains that are prepar’d for thee ;
 ‘ To the remorseless rack I wou’d have giv’n
 ‘ This weak and tender flesh, to have been bruis’d
 ‘ And torn, rather than have reveal’d thy being.’

King. Hell, hell ! Do I hear this, and yet endure !
 What, dar’st thou to my face avow thy guilt ?
 Hence, ere I curse—fly my just rage with speed ;
 Lest I forget us both, and spurn thee from me.

Alm. And yet a father ! Think, I am your child !
 Turn not your eyes away—look on me kneeling ;
 Now curse me if you can, now spurn me off.
 Did ever father curse his kneeling child ?
 Never ; for always blessings crown that posture.

‘ Nature inclines, and half way meets that duty,
 ‘ Stooping to raise from earth the filial reverence ;
 ‘ For bended knees returning folding arms,
 ‘ With pray’rs, and blessings, and paternal love.’
 Oh, hear me then, thus crawling on the earth——

King. Be thou advis’d, and let me go, while yet
 The light impression thou hast made remains.

Alm. No, never will I rise, nor lose this hold,
 ‘Till you are mov’d, and grant that he may live.

King. Ha ! Who may live ? Take heed ! No more of
 For on my soul he dies, tho’ thou and I, [that ;
 And all shou’d follow to partake his doom.
 Away, off, let me go——Call her attendants.

[*Leonora and women return.*

Alm. Drag me ; harrow the earth with my bare bosom ;
 I will not go ‘till you have spar’d my husband.

King. Ha ! ‘ What say’st thou ?’ Husband ! ‘ Husband !
 damnation !

‘ What husband !’ Which ? Who ?

Alm. He, he is my husband.

King. ‘ Poison and daggers !’ Who ?

Alm. Oh——

[*Faints.*

‘ *Gonj.* Help, support her.’

Alm. Let me go, let me fall, sink deep—I’ll dig,
 I’ll dig a grave, and tear up death ; ‘ I will ;
 ‘ I’ll scrape, ‘till I collect his rotten bones,
 ‘ And cloath their nakedness with my own flesh ;’
 Yes, I will strip off life, and we will change :

I

I will

I will be death; then, tho' you kill my husband,
He shall be mine still, and for ever mine.

King. What husband? Whom dost thou mean?

Gonf. She raves!

Alm. 'Oh, that I did.' Osmyn, he is my husband.

King. Osmyn!

Alm. Not Osmyn, but Alphonso, is my dear
And wedded husband——Heav'n, and air, and seas,
Ye winds and waves, I call ye all to witness.

King. Wilder than winds or waves thyself dost rave.
Shou'd I hear more, I too shou'd catch thy madness.

'Yet somewhat she must mean of dire import,
'Which I'll not hear, 'till I am more at peace.'
Watch her returning sense, and bring me word;
And look that she attempt not on her life. [*Exit King.*]

Alm. Oh, stay, yet stay; hear me, I am not mad.
I wou'd to Heav'n I were——He's gone.

Gonf. Have comfort.

Alm. Curs'd be that tongue that bids me be of com-
fort;

Curs'd my own tongue, that could not move his pity;
Curs'd these weak hands, that could not hold him here;
For he is gone to doom Alphonso's death.

Gonf. Your too excessive grief works on your fancy,
And deludes your sense. Alphonso, if living,
Is far from hence, beyond your father's pow'r.

Alm. Hence, thou detested, ill-tim'd flatterer;
Source of my woes: thou and thy race be curs'd;
But doubly thou, who couldst alone have policy
And fraud to find the fatal secret out,
And know that Osmyn was Alphonso.

Gonf. Ha!

Alm. Why dost thou start? What dost thou see or
Was it the doleful bell, tolling for death? [*hear?*]
Or dying groans from my Alphonso's breast?
See, see, look yonder! where a grizzled, pale,
And ghastly herd glares by, all smear'd with blood,
Gasping as it would speak; and after, see;
Behold a damp, dead hand has dropp'd a dagger:
I'll catch it—Hark! a voice cries murder! ah!
My father's voice! hollow it sounds, and calls

Me from the tomb—I'll follow it; for there
I shall again behold my dear Alphonso.

[*Exeunt Almeria and Leonora.*]

Gonf. She's greatly griev'd; nor am I less surpriz'd.
Csmyn, Alphonso! No; she over rates
My policy; I ne'er suspected it:
Nor now had known it, but from her mistake.
Her husband too! Ha! Where is Garcia then?
And where the crown that shou'd descend on him,
'To grace the line of my posterity?
Hold, let me think——if I should tell the king——
Things come to this extremity: his daughter
Wedded already——what if he should yield?
Knowing no remedy for what is past,
And urg'd by nature pleading for his child,
With which he seems to be already shaken.
And tho' I know he hates beyond the grave
Anselmo's race; yet it——that If concludes me.
'To doubt, when I may be assur'd, is folly.
But how prevent the captive queen, who means
To set him free? Ay, now 'tis plain. O well
Invented tale! He was Alphonso's friend.
'This subtle woman will amuse the king.
If I delay——'twill do——or better so.
One to my wish. Alonzo, thou art welcome.

Enter Alonzo.

Alon. The king expects your lordship.

Gonf. 'Tis no matter.

I'm not i'the way at present, good Alonzo.

Alon. If't please your lordship, I'll return, and say
I have not seen you.

Gonf. Do, my best Alonzo.

Yet stay, I would——but go; anon will serve——

Yet I have that requires thy speedy help.

I think thou wou'dst not stop to do me service.

Alon. I am your creature.

Gonf. Say thou art my friend.

I've seen thy sword do noble execution.

Alon. All that it can your lordship shall command.

Gonf. Thanks; and I take thee at thy word. Thou'rt
Amongst the followers of the captive queen, [seen,
Dumb men, who make their meaning known by signs.

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Alon. I have, my lord.

Gon. Couldst thou procure, with speed
And privacy, the wearing garb of one
Of those, tho' purchas'd by his death, I'd give
Thee such reward, as shou'd exceed thy wish. [ship?

Alon. Conclude it done. Where shall I wait your lord-

Gon. At my apartment. Use thy utmost diligence;
And say I've not been seen--Haste, good Alonzo. [*Ex. Al.*
So, this can hardly fail. Alphonso slain,
The greatest obstacle is then remov'd.
Almeria widow'd, yet again may wed;
And I yet fix the crown on Garcia's head. [*Exit.*

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

SCENE, *a room of state.*

Enter King, Perez, and Alonzo.

KING.

NOT to be found! In an ill hour he's absent.
None, say you? none! What, not the fav'rite
eunuch?

Nor she herself, nor any of her mutes,
Have yet requir'd admittance?

Per. None, my lord.

King. Is Osmyrn so dispos'd as I commanded?

Per. Fast bound in double chains, and at full length
He lies supine on earth; with as much ease
She might remove the centre of this earth,
As loose the rivets of his bonds.

King. 'Tis well.

[*A mute appears, and seeing the king, retires.*

Ha! stop, and seize that mute; Alonzo, follow him.
Ent'ring he met my eyes, and started back,
Frighted, and fumbling one hand in his bosom,
As to conceal th' importance of his errand.

[*Alonzo follows him, and returns with a paper.*

Alon. A bloody proof of obstinate fidelity!

King. What dost thou mean?

Alon.

Alon. Soon as I seiz'd the man,
He snatch'd from out his bosom this—and strove
With rash and greedy haste, at once, to cram
The morsel down his throat. I caught his arm,
And hardly wrench'd his hand to wring it from him ;
Which done, he drew a poignard from his side,
And on the instant plung'd it in his breast.

King. Remove the body thence, ere Zara see it.

Alon. I'll be so bold to borrow his attire ;
'Twill quit me of my promise to Gonzalez. [*Aside. Exit.*
' *Per.* Whate'er it is, the king's complexion turns.'

King. How's this ? My mortal foe beneath my roof !

[*Having read the letter.*

Oh, give me patience, all ye powers ! No, rather
Give me new rage, implacable revenge,
And trebled fury—Ha ! who's there ?

Per. My lord. [pry

King. Hence, slave ! how dar'st thou bide, to watch and
Into how poor a thing a king descends,
How like thyself, when passion treads him down ?
Ha ! stir not, on thy life ; for thou wert fix'd,
And planted here, to see me gorge this bait,
And lash against the hook—By Heav'n, you're all
Rank traitors ; thou art with the rest combin'd ;
Thou knew'st that Osinyn was Alphonso ; knew'st
My daughter privately with him conferr'd ;
And wert the spy and pander to their meeting.

Per. By all that's holy, I'm amaz'd—

King. Thou ly'st.

Thou art accomplice too with Zara ; here
Where she sets down—*Still will I set thee free*—[*Reading.*
That somewhere is repeated—*I have power*
O'er them that are thy guards—Mark that, thou traitor.

Per. It was your majesty's command I should
Obey her order.—

King. [*Reading.*]—*And still will I set*
Thee free, Alphonso—Hell ! curs'd, curs'd Alphonso !
False and perfidious Zara ! Strumpet daughter !
Away, begone, thou feeble boy, fond love ;
All nature, softness, pity and compassion,
This hour I throw ye off, and entertain
Fell hate within my breast, revenge and gall.

By Heav'n, I'll meet, and counterwork this treachery.
Hark thee, villain, traitor—answer me, slave.

Per. My service has not merited those titles.

King. Dar'it thou reply? 'Take that'—thy service!
thine! [*Strikes him.*]

What's thy whole life, thy soul, thy all, to my
One moment's ease? Hear my command; and look
That thou obey, or horror on thy head:
Drench me thy dagger in Alphonso's heart.
Why dost thou start? Resolve, or——

Per. Sir, I will.

King. 'Tis well—that when she comes to set him free,
His teeth may grin, and mock at her remorse.

[*Perez going.*]

—Stay thee — I've farther thought — I'll add to this,
And give her eyes yet greater disappointment:
When thou hast ended him, bring me his robe;
And let the cell where she'll expect to see him
Be darken'd, so as to amuse the sight.

I'll be conducted thither——mark me well——
There with his turbant, and his robe array'd,
And laid along, as he now lies, supine,
I shall convict her, to her face, of falsehood.

When for Alphonso's she shall take my hand,
And breathe her sighs upon my lips for his;
Sudden I'll start and dash her with her guilt.
But see, she comes. I'll shun th' encounter; thou
Follow me, and give heed to my direction. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Zara and Selim.

Za. 'The mute not yet return'd!' ha! 'twas the king,
The king that parted hence! frowning he went;
'His eyes like meteors roll'd, then darted down
'Their red and angry beams; as if his sight
'Would, like the raging dog-star, scorch the earth,
'And kindle ruin in its course:' Dost think
He saw me?

Sel. Yes: but then, as if he thought
His eyes had err'd, he hastily recall'd
Th' imperfect look, and sternly turn'd away.

Za. Shun me when seen! I fear thou hast undone me.
'Thy shallow artifice begets suspicion,
'And, like a cobweb veil, but thinly shades

'The

' The face of thy design ; alone disguising
 ' What should have ne'er been seen ; imperfect mischief !
 ' Thou, like the adder, venomous and deaf,
 ' Hast stung the traveller, and after hear'st
 ' Not his pursuing voice ; e'en when thou think'st
 ' To hide, the rustling leaves and bended grafs
 ' Confess and point the path which thou hast crept.
 ' Oh, fate of fools ! officious in contriving ;
 ' In executing, puzzled, lame, and lost.'

Scl. Avert, it Heav'n, that you should ever suffer
 For my defect ; or that the means which I
 Devis'd to serve, should ruin your design.
 Prescience is Heav'n's alone, not giv'n to man.
 If I have fail'd, in what, as being man,
 I needs must fail ; impute not as a crime
 My nature's want, but punish nature in me ;
 I plead not for a pardon, and to live,
 But to be punish'd and forgiven. Here, strike ;
 I bare my breast to meet your just revenge.

Za. I have not leisure now to take so poor
 A forfeit as thy life ; somewhat of high
 And more important fate requires my thought.
 ' When I've concluded on myself, if I
 ' Think fit, I'll leave thee my command to die.'
 Regard me well ; and dare not to reply
 To what I give in charge ; for I'm resolv'd.
 Give order that the two remaining mutes
 Attend me instantly, with each a bowl
 Of such ingredients mix'd, as will with speed
 Benumb the living faculties, and give
 Most easy and inevitable death.
 Yes, Osmyyn, yes ; be Osmyyn or Alphonso,
 I'll give thee freedom, if thou dar'st be free :
 Such liberty as I embrace myself,
 Thou shalt partake. Since fates no more afford ;
 I can but die with thee, to keep my word. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE opening, shews the prison.

Enter Gofalez disguised like a mute, with a dagger.

Gon. Nor centinel, nor guard ! the doors unbarr'd !
 And all as still, as at the noon of night !
 Sure death already has been busy here.

There

There lies my way; that door too is unlock'd. [*Looking in.*
 Ha! sure he sleeps— all's dark within, save what
 A lamp, that feebly lifts a sickly flame,
 By fits reveals—his face seems turn'd, to favour
 Th' attempt: I'll steal and do it unperceiv'd.
 What noise! somebody coming? 'ft, Alonzo?
 Nobody. Sure he'll wait without—— I would
 'Twere done—I'll crawl, and sting him to the heart,
 Then cast my skin, and leave it there to answer it. [*Goes in.*

Enter Garcia and Alonzo.

Gar. Where, where, Alonzo, where's my father?
 where

The king? Confusion! all is on the rout!
 All's lost, all ruin'd by surprize and treachery.
 Where, where is he! Why dost thou mislead me?

Alon. My lord, he enter'd but a moment since,
 And could not pass me unperceiv'd—What ho!
 My lord, my lord! What ho! my lord Gonzalez!

Enter Gonzalez bloody.

Gon. Perdition choak your clamours——whence this
 Garcia! [*rudeness?*

Gar. Perdition, slavery, and death,
 Are ent'ring now our doors. Where is the king?
 What means this blood; and why this face of horror?

Gon. No matter—give me first to know the cause
 Of these your rash, and ill-tim'd exclamations.

Gar. The eastern gate is to the foe betray'd,
 Who, but for heaps of slain that choak the passage,
 Had enter'd long ere now, and borne down all
 Before 'em, to the palace walls. Unless
 The king in person animate our men,
 Granada's lost; and to confirm this fear,
 The traitor Perez, and the captive Moor,
 Are through a postern fled, and join the foe.

Gon. Would all were false as that; for whom you call
 The Moor is dead. That Osmyn was Alphonso;
 In whose heart's blood this poignard yet is warm.

Gar. Impossible; for Osmyn was, while flying,
 Pronounc'd aloud by Perez for Alphonso.

Gon. Enter that chamber, and convince your eyes,
 How much report has wrong'd your easy faith.

[*Garcia goes in.*

Alon.

Alon. My lord, for certain truth Perez is fled;
And has declar'd, the cause of his revolt
Was to revenge a blow the king had giv'n him.

Gar. [*Returning.*] Ruin and horror! Oh, heart-wounding fight!

Gon. What says my son? What ruin? Ha! what horror?

Gar. Blasted my eyes, and speechless be my tongue,
Rather than or to see, or to relate
This deed—Oh, dire mistake! Oh, fatal blow!
The king——

Gon. *Alon.* The king!

Gar. Dead, welt'ring, drown'd in blood.
See, see, attir'd like Osmyrn, where he lies. [*They look in.*
Oh, whence, or how, or wherefore was this done?
But what imports the manner or the cause?
Nothing remains to do, or to require,
But that we all should turn our swords against
Ourselves, and expiate with our own, his blood.

Gon. Oh, wretch! Oh, curs'd and rash deluded fool!
On me, on me turn your avenging swords.
I, who have spilt my royal master's blood,
Should make atonement by a death as horrid,
And fall beneath the hand of my own son.

Gar. Ha! what! atone this murder with a greater!
The horror of that thought has damp'd my rage.
' The earth already groans to bear this deed;
' Oppress her not, nor think to stain her face
' With more unnatural blood. Murder my father!
' Better with this to rip up my own bowels,
' And bathe it to the hilt, in far less damnable
' Self-murder.'

Gon. Oh, my son! from the blind dotage
Of a father's fondness these ills arose.
For thee i've been ambitious, base, and bloody:
For thee I've plung'd into this sea of sin;
Stemming the tide with only one weak hand,
While t'other bore the crown (to wreathe thy brow)
Whose weight has sunk me, ere I reach'd the shore.

Gar. Fatal ambition! Hark! the foe is enter'd: [*Shout.*
The shrillness of that shout speaks them at hand.

' We have no time to search into the cause
' Of this surprising and most fatal error.

' What's

‘ What’s to be done? the king’s death known, would
 ‘ The few remaining soldiers with despair, [strike
 ‘ And make them yield to mercy of the conqueror.’

Alon. My lord, I’ve thought how to conceal the body.
 Require me not to tell the means, till done,
 Lest you forbid what you may then approve.

[*Goes in. Shout.*

Gon. They shout again! Whate’er he means to do,
 ’Twere fit the soldiers were amus’d with hopes;
 And in the mean time fed with expectation
 To see the king in person at their head.

Gar. Were it a truth, I fear ’tis now too late.
 But I’ll omit no care, nor haste, ; and try,
 Or to repel their force, or bravely die. [Exit Garcia.

Re-enter Alonzo.

Gon. What hast thou done, Alonzo?

Alon. Such a deed,
 As but an hour ago I’d not have done,
 Though for the crown of universal empire.
 But what are kings reduc’d to common clay?
 Or who can wound the dead?—I’ve from the body
 Sever’d the head, and in an obscure corner
 Dispos’d it, muffled in the mute’s attire,
 Leaving to view of them who enter next,
 Alone the undistinguishable trunk:
 Which may be still mistaken by the guards
 For Osmyn, if in seeking for the king,
 They chance to find it.

Gon. ’Twas an act of horror;
 And of a piece with this day’s dire misdeeds.
 But ’tis no time to ponder or repent.
 Haste thee, Alonzo, haste thee hence with speed,
 To aid my son. I’ll follow with the last
 Reserve, to reinforce his arms: at least,
 I shall make good and shelter his retreat.

[*Exeunt severally.*

*Enter Zara, followed by Selim, and two mutes bearing
 the bowls.*

Za. Silence and solitude are every where.
 Through all the gloomy ways and iron doors
 That hither lead, nor human face nor voice
 Is seen or heard. ‘ A dreadful din was wont

' To grate the sense, when enter'd here, from groans
 ' And howls of slaves condemn'd; from clink of chains,
 ' And crash of rusty bars and creaking hinges:
 ' And ever and anon the fight was dash'd
 ' With frightful faces, and the meagre looks
 ' Of grim and ghastly executioners.
 ' Yet more this stillness terrifies my soul,
 ' Than did that scene of complicated horrors.
 ' It may be that the cause of this my errand
 ' And purpose, being chang'd from life to death,
 ' Had also wrought this chilling change of temper.
 ' Or does my heart bode more? What can it more
 ' Than death?'

Let 'em set down the bowls, and warn Alphonso
That I am here—so. You return and find

[Mutes going in.

The king; tell him, what he requir'd, I've done,
And wait his coming to approve the deed. [Exit Selim.

Enter Mutes.

Zara. What have you seen? Ha! wherefore stare you
thus

[The mutes return and look affrighted.

With haggard eyes? Why are your arms across?

Your heavy and desponding heads hung down?

Why is't you more than speak in these sad signs?

Give me more ample knowledge of this mourning.

[They go to the scene, which opening, she perceives the body.

Ha! prostrate! bloody! headless! Oh———I'm lost.

Oh, Osmyn! Oh, Alphonso! Cruel fate!

Cruel, cruel; Oh, more than killing object!

I came prepar'd to die, and see thee die—

Nay, came prepar'd myself to give thee death—

But cannot bear to find thee thus, my Osmyn———

Oh, this accurs'd, this base, this treach'rous king!

Enter Selim.

Selim. I've fought in vain, for no where can the king
Be found———

Zar. Get thee to hell, and seek him there. [Stabs him.

His hellish rage had wanted means to act,

But for thy fatal and pernicious counsel.

Sel. You thought it better then———but I'm rewarded.

The mute you sent, by some mischance was seen,

And

And forc'd to yield your letter with his life ;
 I found the dead and bloody body stripp'd——
 My tongue falters, and my voice fails——I sink——
 Drink not the poison—for Alphonso is—— [Dies.]

Zar. As thou art now—and I shall quickly be,
 'Tis not that he is dead : for 'twas decreed
 We both should die. Nor is't that I survive ;
 I have a certain remedy for that.
 But, Oh, he dy'd unknowing in my heart.
 He knew I lov'd, but knew not to what height :
 Nor that I meant to fall before his eyes,
 A martyr and a victim to my vows,
 Insensible of this last proof he's gone ;
 ' Yet fate alone can rob his mortal part
 ' Of sense ; his soul still sees and knows each purpose,
 ' And fix'd event, of my persisting faith.'
 Then wherefore do I pause ? Give me the bowl.

[*A mute kneels and gives one of the bowls.*

Hover a moment, yet, thou gentle spirit,
 Soul of my love, and I will wait thy flight.
 This to our mutual bliss, when join'd above. [Drinks.]
 Oh, friendly draught, already in my heart.
 Cold, cold ; my veins are icicles and frost.
 I'll creep into his bosom, lay me there ;
 Cover us close—or I shall chill his breast,
 And fright him from my arms—See, see, he slides
 Still farther from me ; look, he hides his face,
 I cannot feel it—quite beyond my reach,—
 Oh, now he's gone, and all is dark—— [Dies.]

[*The mutes kneel and mourn over her.*

Enter Almeria and Leonora.

Alm. Oh, let me seek him in this horrid cell ;
 For in the tomb, or prison, I alone
 Must hope to find him.

Leon. Heavens ! what dismal scene
 Of death is this ? The eunuch Selim slain !

Alm. Shew me, for I am come in search of death ;
 But want a guide ; for tears have dimm'd my sight.

Leon. Alas, a little farther, and behold
 Zara all pale and dead ! two frightful men,
 Who seem the murderers, kneel weeping by ;
 Feeling remorse too late for what they've done.

But, Oh, forbear—lift up your eyes no more;
 But haste away, fly from this fatal place,
 Where miseries are multiply'd; return,
 Return, and look not on; for there's a dagger
 Ready to stab the fight, and make your eyes
 Rain blood——

Alm. Oh, I foreknow, foresee that object.
 Is it at last then so? Is he then dead?
 'What, dead at last? quite, quite, for every dead?
 'There, there, I see him; there he lies, the blood
 'Yet bubbling from his wounds—Oh, more than savage!
 'Had they or hearts or eyes that did this deed?
 'Could eyes endure to guide such cruel hands?
 'Are not my eyes guilty alike with theirs,
 'That thus can gaze, and yet not turn to stone?
 ——I do not weep! The springs of tears are dry'd;
 And of a sudden I am calm, as if
 All things were well; and yet my husband's murder'd!
 Yes, yes, I know to mourn! I'll sluice this heart,
 The source of woe, and let the torrent loose.
 ——Those men have left to weep! they look on me!
 I hope they murder all on whom they look.
 Behold me well; your bloody hands have err'd,
 And wrongfully have slain those innocents:
 I am the sacrifice design'd to bleed,
 And come prepar'd to yield my throat——They shake
 Their heads in sign of grief and innocence!

[They point at the bowl on the ground.]

And point! What mean they? Ha! a cup; Oh, well,
 I understand what med'cine has been here.

Oh, noble thirst! yet greedy to drink all——

——Oh, for another draught of death——'What mean
 they?

[They point at the other cup.]

'Ha! point again!' 'tis there, and full, I hope.

Thanks to the lib'ral hand that fill'd thee thus,

I'll drink my glad acknowledgment——

Leon. Oh, hold

For mercy's sake, upon my knee I beg——

Alm. With thee the kneeling world should beg in vain.

Seest thou not there? Behold who prostrate lies,

And pleads against thee; who shall then prevail?

Yet I will take a cold and parting leave

From his pale lips; I'll kiss him ere I drink,

Left the rank juice should blister on my mouth,
And stain the colour of my last adieu.

Horror! a headless trunk! nor lips nor face,

[Coming near the body, starts and lets fall the cup.]

But spouting veins, and mangled flesh! Oh, Oh!

Enter Alphonso, Heli, Perez, with Garcia prisoner.

Guards and attendants.

Alph. Away, stand off, where is she? let me fly,
Save her from death, and snatch her to my heart.

Alm. Oh!

Alph. Forbear; my arms alone shall hold her up,
Warm her to life, and wake her into gladness.

‘Oh, let me talk to thy reviving sense

‘The words of joy and peace; warm thy cold beauties

‘With the new flushing ardour of my cheek;

‘Into thy lips pour the soft trickling balm

‘Of cordial sighs; and reinspire thy bosom

‘With the breath of love. Shine, awake, Almeria,’

Give a new birth to thy long-shaded eyes,

Then double on the day reflected light.

Alm. Where am I? Heav’n! what does this dream intend?

Alph. Oh, may’st thou never dream of less delight,
Nor ever wake to less substantial joys.

Alm. Giv’n me again from death! Oh, all ye pow’rs,
Confirm this miracle! Can I believe

My sight ‘against my sight? and shall I trust

‘That sense, which in one instant shews him dead

‘And living?’—Yes, I will; I’ve been abus’d

With apparitions and affrighting phantoms:

This is my lord, my life, my only husband,

I have him now, and we no more will part.

My father too shall have compassion——

Alph. Oh, my heart’s comfort; ’tis not giv’n to this
Frail life, to be intirely bless’d. E’en now,

In this extremest joy my soul can taste,

Yet I am dash’d to think that thou must weep;

Thy father fell where he design’d my death.

Gonsalez and Alonzo, both of wounds

Expiring, have, with their last breath, confess’d

The just decrees of Heav’n, which on themselves

Has turn’d their own most bloody purposes.

Nay, I must grant, 'tis fit you should be thus——

[She weeps.]

' Let 'em remove the body from her sight.'

Ill-fated Zara! Ha! a cup! Alas!

Thy error then is plain! but I were flint

Not to o'erflow in tribute to thy memory.

Oh, Garcia!——

Whose virtue has renounc'd thy father's crimes,

Seest thou, how just the hand of Heav'n has been?

Let us, who through our innocence survive,

Still in the paths of honour persevere,

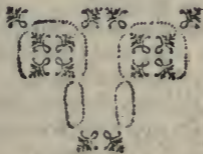
And not from past or present ills despair;

For blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds;

And though a late, a sure reward succeeds.

[Exeunt omnes.]

END of the FIFTH ACT.



EPILOGUE.

Spoken by ALMERIA.

THE tragedy thus done, I am, you know,
 No more a princess, but in statu quo;
 And now as unconcern'd this mourning wear,
 As if indeed a widow, or an heir.
 I've leisure, now, to mark your sev'ral faces,
 And know each critic by his sour grimaces.
 To poison plays, I see them where they sit,
 Scatter'd, like ratsbane, up and down the pit;
 While others watch, like parish-searchers hir'd,
 To tell of what disease the play expir'd.
 Oh, with what joy they run to spread the new
 Of a damn'd poet, and departed muse!
 But if he 'scape, with what regret they're seiz'd!
 And how they're disappointed, when they're pleas'd!
 Critics to plays for the same end resort,
 That surgeons wait on trials in a court:
 For innocence condemn'd they've no respect,
 Provided they've a body to dissect.
 As Suffex men, that dwell upon the shore,
 Look out when storms arise, and billovs roar,
 Devoutly praying, with uplifted hands,
 That some well-laden ship may strike the sands,
 To whose rich cargo they may make pretence,
 And fatten on the spoils of Providence:
 So critics throng to see a new play split,
 And thrive and prosper on the wrecks of wit.
 Small hope our poet from these prospects draws;
 And therefore to the fair commends his cause.
 Your tender hearts to mercy are inclin'd,
 With whom, he hopes, this play will favour find,
 Which was an off'ring to the sex design'd.



BELL'S EDITION.



Tancred and Sigismunda.

A TRAGEDY,

As written by Mr. THOMSON.

DISTINGUISHING ALSO THE

VARIATIONS OF THE THEATRE,

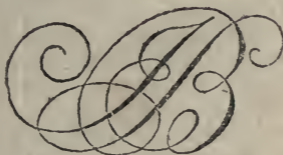
AS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Dury-Lane.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book,

By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,

By Mr. HOPKINS, Prompter.



L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN BELL, near *Exeter-Exchange*, in the *Strand*,
and C. ETHERINGTON, at *York*.

TO HIS
 ROYAL HIGHNESS
 F R E D E R I C K,
 Prince of WALES.

S I R,

THE honour your Royal Highness has done me in the protection you was pleased to give to this tragedy, emboldens me to lay it now at your feet, and beg your permission to publish it under Royal patronage. The favouring and protecting of letters has been, in all ages and countries, one distinguishing mark of a great prince; and that with good reason, not only as it shews a justness of taste, and elevation of mind, but as the influence of such a protection, by exciting good writers to labour with more emulation in the improvement of their several talents, not a little contributes to the embellishment and instruction of society. But of all the different species of writing, none has such an effect upon the lives and manners of men, as the dramatic; and therefore, that of all others most deserves the attention of princes; who, by a judicious approbation of such pieces as tend to promote all public and private virtue, may more than by any coercive methods, secure the purity of the stage, and in consequence thereof greatly advance the morals and politeness of their people. How eminently your Royal Highness has always extended your favour and

patronage to every art and science, and in a particular manner to dramatic performances, is too well known to the world for me to mention it here. Allow me only to wish, that what I have now the honour to offer to your Royal Highness, may be judged not unworthy of your protection, at least in the sentiments which it inculcates. A warm and grateful sense of your goodness to me, makes me desirous to seize every occasion of declaring in public, with what profound respect and dutiful attachment, I am,

S I R,

Your Royal Highness's

Most obliged,

Most obedient, and

Most devoted servant,

JAMES THOMSON.

P R O L O G U E.

BOLD is the man! who, in this nicer age,
 Presumes to tread the chaste corrected stage,
 Now, with gay tinsel arts, we can no more
 Conceal the want of nature's sterling ore.
 Our spells are vanish'd, broke our magic wand,
 That us'd to waft you over sea and land.
 Before your light the fairy people fade,
 The demons fly—The ghost itself is laid.
 In vain of martial scenes the loud alarms,
 The mighty prompter thundering out to arms,
 The playhouse posse clattering from afar,
 The close-wedg'd battle, and the din of war.
 Now, even the senate seldom we convene;
 The yawning fathers nod behind the scene.
 Your taste rejects the glittering false sublime,
 To sigh in metaphor, and die in rhyme.
 High rant is tumbled from his gallery throne:
 Description, dreams—nay, similies are gone.

What shall we then? to please you how devise,
 Whose judgment fits not in your ears and eyes?
 Thrice happy! could we catch great Shakspeare's art,
 To trace the deep recesses of the heart:
 His simple, plain sublime, to which is given
 To strike the soul with darted flame from heaven:
 Could we awake soft Otway's tender woe,
 The pomp of verse and golden lines of Rowe.

We to your hearts apply: let them attend;
 Before their silent candid bar we bend.
 If warm'd, they listen, 'tis our noblest praise:
 If cold, they wither all the muse's bays.

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

	<i>Drury-Lane.</i>
<i>Tancred</i> , count of <i>Leece</i> ,	Mr. Reddish.
<i>Matteo Siffredi</i> , lord high chancellor of <i>Sicily</i> , - - - -	Mr. Jefferson.
Earl <i>Osmond</i> , lord high constable of <i>Sicily</i> , - - - -	Mr. Palmer.
<i>Rodolpho</i> , friend to <i>Tancred</i> , and captain of the guards, - -	Mr. Whitfield.

W O M E N.

<i>Sigismunda</i> , daughter of <i>Siffredi</i> ,	Miss Younge.
<i>Laura</i> , sister of <i>Rodolpho</i> , and friend to <i>Sigismunda</i> , - - -	Miss Sherry.

Barons, Officers, Guards, &c.

SCENE, *the city of Palermo in Sicily.*

Tancred and Sigismunda.

A C T I.

SCENE, *the palace.*

Sigismunda and Laura.

SIGISMUNDA.

AH, fatal day to Sicily! The king
Touches his last moments?

Lau. So 'tis fear'd.

Sig. ' The death of those distinguish'd by their station,
' But by their virtue more, awakes the mind
' To solemn dread, and strikes a saddening awe :
' Not that we grieve for them, but for ourselves,
' Left to the toil of life—And yet the best
' Are, by the playful children of this world,
' At once forgot, as they had never been.'

Laura, 'tis said, the heart is sometimes charged
With a prophetic sadness: such, methinks,
Now hangs on mine. The king's approaching death
Suggests a thousand fears. What troubles thence
May throw the state once more into confusion,
What sudden changes in my father's house
May rise, and part me from my dearest Tancred,
Alarms my thoughts.

Lau. The fears of love-sick fancy!
Perversely busy to torment itself.
But be assur'd, your father's steady friendship,
Join'd to a certain genius, that commands,
Not kneels to fortune, will support and cherish,
Here in the public eye of Sicily,
This, I may call him, his adopted son,
The noble Tancred, form'd to all his virtues.

Sig. Ah, form'd to charm his daughter!—This fair
morn

Has

Has tempted far the chace. Is he not yet
Return'd?

Lau. No.—When your father to the king,
Who now expiring lies, was call'd in haste,
He sent each way his messengers to find him;
With such a look of ardour and impatience,
As if this near event was to count Tancred
Of more importance than I comprehend.

Sig. There lies, my Laura, o'er my Tancred's birth,
A cloud I cannot pierce. With princely accost,
Nay, with respect, which oft I have observ'd
Stealing at times submissive o'er his features,
In Belmont's woods my father rear'd this youth—
Ah, woods! where first my artless bosom learn'd
The sighs of love.—He gives him out the son
Of an old friend, a baron of Apulia,
Who in the late crusado bravely fell.
But then 'tis strange; is all his family
As well as father dead? and all their friends,
Except my sire, the generous good Siffredi?
Had he a mother, sister, brother left,
The last remain of kindred; with what pride,
What rapture, might they fly o'er earth and sea,
To claim this rising honour of their blood!
This bright unknown! this all-accomplish'd youth!
Who charms, too much, the heart of Sigismunda!
' Laura, perhaps your brother knows him better,
' The friend and partner of his freest hours.'
What says Rodolpho? Does he truly credit
This story of his birth?

Lau. He has sometimes,
Like you, his doubts; yet, when maturely weigh'd,
Believes it true. As for lord Tancred's self,
He never entertain'd the slightest thought
That verg'd to doubt; but oft laments his state,
By cruel fortune so ill-pair'd to yours.

Sig. Merit like his, the fortune of the mind,
Beggars all wealth—Then, to your brother, Laura,
He talks of me?

Lau. Of nothing else. Howe'er
The talk begin, it ends with Sigismunda.
Their morning, noontide, and their evening walks,

Are full of you ; and all the woods of Belmont
Enamour'd with your name——

Sig. Away, my friend ;
You flatter——yet the dear delusion charms.

Lau. No, Sigismunda, 'tis the strictest truth,
Nor half the truth, I tell you. Even with fondness
My brother talks for ever of the passion,
That fires young Tancred's breast. So much it strikes
him,

He praises love as if he were a lover.

He blames the false pursuits of vagrant youth,
Calls them gay folly, a mistaken struggle
Against best judging nature.' Heaven, he says,
In lavish bounty form'd the heart for love ;
In love included all the finer seeds
Of honour, virtue, friendship, purest bliss——

Sig. Virtuous Rodolpho !

Lau. Then his pleasing theme
He varies to the praises of your lover——

Sig. And what, my Laura, says he on the subject ?

Lau. He says that, tho' he were not nobly born,
Nature has form'd him noble, generous, brave,
Truly magnanimous, and warmly scorning
Whatever bears the smallest taint of baseness :
That every easy virtue is his own ;
Not learnt by painful labour, but inspir'd,
Implanted in his soul.'—Chiefly one charm
He in his graceful character observes ;
That tho' his passions burn with high impatience,
And sometimes, from a noble heat of nature,
Are ready to fly off ; yet the least check
Of ruling reason brings them back to temper,
And gentle softness.

Sig. True ! Oh, true, Rodolpho !
Nest be thy kindred worth for loving his !
He is all warmth, all amiable fire,
All quick heroic ardor ! temper'd soft
With gentleness of heart, and manly reason !
If virtue were to wear a human form,
To light it with her dignity and flame,
When soft'ning mix her smiles and tender graces ;
Oh, she would chuse the person of my Tancred !

Go on, my friend, go on, and ever praise him ;
 The subject knows no bounds, nor can I tire,
 While my breast trembles to that sweetest music !
 The heart of woman tastes no truer joy,
 Is never flatter'd with such dear enchantment——
 ' 'Tis more than selfish vanity'—as when
 She hears the praises of the man she loves——
 Lau. Madam, your father comes.

Enter Siffredi.

Sif. [*To an attendant as he enters.*] Lord Tancred
 Is found ?

At. My lord, he quickly will be here.

' I scarce could keep before him, though he bid me
 ' Speed on, to say he would attend your orders.'

Sif. 'Tis well—retire—You, too, my daughter
 leave me.

Sig. I go, my father—But how fares the king ?

Sif. He is no more. Gone to that awful state,
 Where kings the crown wear only of their virtues.

Sig. How bright must then be his!—This stroke
 fudden ;

He was this morning well, when to the chace
 Lord Tancred went.

Sif. 'Tis true. But at his years
 Death gives short notice—Drooping nature then,
 Without a gust of pain to shake it, falls.
 His death, my daughter, was that happy period
 Which few attain. The duties of his day
 Were all discharg'd, 'and gratefully enjoy'd
 ' It's noblest blessings ;' calm as evening skies,
 Was his pure mind, and lighted up with hopes
 That open heaven ; when, for his last long sleep
 Timely prepar'd, a lassitude of life,
 A pleasing weariness of mortal joy,
 Fell on his soul, and down he sunk to rest.

Oh, may my death be such !——He but one wish
 Left unfulfill'd, which was to see count Tancred——

Sig. To see count Tancred !—Pardon me, my lord—

Sif. For what, my daughter ?—But, with such emotion
 Why did you start at mention of count Tancred ?

Sig. Nothing—I only hop'd the dying king

Might mean to make some generous just provision
For this your worthy charge, this noble orphan.

Sif. And he has done it largely—Leave me now—
I want some private conference with lord Tancred.

[*Exeunt Sigismunda and Laura.*]

Sif. My doubts are but too true—If these old eyes
Can trace the marks of love, a mutual passion
Has seiz'd, I fear, my daughter and this prince,
My sovereign now—Should it be so? Ah, there,
There lurks a brooding tempest, that may shake
My long concerted scheme, to settle firm
The public peace and welfare, which the king
Has made the prudent basis of his will—
Away, unworthy views! you shall not tempt me!
Nor interest, nor ambition shall seduce
My fix'd resolve—Perish the selfish thought,
Which our own good prefers to that of millions!
He comes, my king, unconscious of his fortune.

Enter Tancred.

Tan. My lord Siffredi, in your looks I read,
Confirm'd, the mournful news that fly abroad
From tongue to tongue—We then, at last, have lost
The good old king?

Sif. Yes, we have lost a father!
The greatest blessing heaven bestows on mortals,
'And seldom found amidst these wilds of time.'
A good, a worthy king!—Hear me, my Tancred,
And I will tell thee, in a few plain words,
How he deserv'd that best, that glorious title.
'Tis nought complex, 'tis clear as truth and virtue.'
He lov'd his people, deem'd them all his children;
The good exalted, and depress'd the bad.
'He spurn'd the flattering crew, with scorn reject'd
'Their smooth advice that only means themselves,
'Their schemes to aggrandize him into baseness;
'Nor did he less disdain the secret breath,
'The whisper'd tale, that blights a virtuous name.'
He sought alone the good of those for whom,
He was entrusted with the sovereign power:
Well knowing that a people in their rights
And industry protected; living safe
Beneath the sacred shelter of the laws,

' Encourag'd in their genius, arts, and labours,
 ' And happy each as he himself deserves,'
 Are ne'er ungrateful. With unsparing hand
 They will for him provide: their filial love
 And confidence are his unfailing treasure,
 And every honest man his faithful guard.

Tan. A general face of grief o'erspreads the city.
 I mark'd the people, as I hither came,
 In crowds assembled, struck with silent sorrow,
 And pouring forth the noblest praise of tears.
 ' Those, whom remembrance of their former woes,
 ' And long experience of the vain illusions
 ' Of youthful hope, had into wise consent
 ' And fear of change corrected, wrung their hands,
 ' And often casting up their eyes to heav'n,
 ' Gave sign of sad conjecture. Others shew'd,
 ' Athwart their grief, or real or affected,
 ' A gleam of expectation, from what chance
 ' And change might bring.' A mingled murmur ran
 Along the streets; and, from the lonely court
 Of him who can no more assist their fortunes,
 I saw the courtier-fry, with eager haste,
 All hurrying to Constantia.

Sif. Noble youth!

I joy to hear from thee these just reflections,
 Worthy of riper years—But if they seek
 Constantia, trust me, they mistake their course.

Tan. How! Is she not, my lord, the late king's sister,
 Heir to the crown of Sicily? the last
 Of our fam'd Norman line, and now our queen?

Sif. Tancred, 'tis true; she is the late king's sister,
 The sole surviving offspring of that tyrant
 William the Bad—' so for his vices stil'd;
 ' Who spilt much noble blood, and sore oppress'd
 ' Th' exhausted land: whence grievous wars arose,
 ' And many a dire convulsion shook the state.
 ' When he, whose death Sicilia mourns to-day,
 ' William, who has and well deserv'd the name
 ' Of Good, succeeding to his father's throne,
 ' Reliev'd his country's woes—But to return:
 ' She is the late king's sister,' born some months
 After the tyrant's death, but not next heir.

Tan. You much surprife me—May I then presume
To ask who is ?

Sif. Come nearer, noble Tancred,
Son of my care. I must, on this occasion,
Consult thy generous heart ; which, when conducted
By rectitude of mind and honest virtues,
Gives better counsel than the hoary head—
Then know, there lives a prince, here in Palermo,
The lineal offspring of our famous hero,
Roger the First.

Tan. Great heaven !—How far remov'd
From that our mighty founder ?

Sif. His great grandson :
Sprung from his eldest son, who died untimely,
Before his father.

Tan. Ha ! the prince you mean,
Is he not Manfred's son ? The generous, brave,
Unhappy Manfred ! whom the tyrant William,
You just now mention'd, not content to spoil
Of his paternal crown, threw into fetters,
And infamously murder'd ?

Sif. Yes, the same.

Tan. ' By heavens, I joy to find our Norman reign,
' The world's sole light amidst these barbarous ages,
' Yet rears its head ; and shall not, from the lance,
' Pass to the feeble distaff.'—But this prince,
Where has he lain conceal'd ?

Sif. The late good king,
By noble pity mov'd, contriv'd to save him
From his dire father's unrelenting rage,
And had him rear'd in private, as became
His birth and hopes, with high and princely nurture.
Till now, too young to rule a troubled state,
By civil broils most miserably torn,
He in his safe retreat has lain conceal'd,
His birth and fortune to himself unknown ;
But when the dying king to me entrusted,
As to the chancellor of the realm, his will,
His successor he nam'd him.

Tan. Happy youth !
He then will triumph o'er his father's foes,
O'er haughty Osmond, and the tyrant's daughter.

Sif. Ay, that is what I dread—that heat of youth ;
 There lurks, I fear, perdition to the state,
 I dread the horrors of rekindled war ;
 Tho' dead, the tyrant still is to be fear'd ;
 His daughter's party still is strong and numerous :
 Her friend, earl Olmond, constable of Sicily,
 Experienc'd, brave, high-born, of mighty interest.
 Better the prince and princess should by marriage
 Unite their friends, their interest, and their claims ;
 Then will the peace and welfare of the land
 On a firm basis rise.

Tan. My lord Siffredi,
 If by myself I of this prince may judge,
 That scheme will scarce succeed—Your prudent age
 In vain will counsel, if the heart forbid it—
 But wherefore fear ? The right is clearly his ;
 ' And, under your direction, with each man
 ' Of worth, and stedfast loyalty, to back
 ' At once the king's appointment and his birthright,
 ' There is no ground for fear. They have great odds,
 ' Against th' astonish'd sons of violence,
 ' Who fight with awful justice on their side.'
 All Sicily will rouse, all faithful hearts
 Will range themselves around prince Manfred's son.
 For me, I here devote me to the service
 Of this young prince ; I every drop of blood
 Will lose with joy, with transport in his cause—
 ' Pardon my warmth—but that, my lord, will never
 ' To this decision come'—Then, find the prince ;
 Lose not a moment to awaken in him
 The royal soul. Perhaps, he now desponding,
 Pines in a corner, and laments his fortune ;
 That in the narrower bounds of private life
 He must confine his aims, those swelling virtues
 Which from his noble father he inherits.

Sif. Perhaps, regardless, in the common bane
 Of youth he melts, in vanity and love.
 But if the seeds of virtue glow within him,
 I will awake a higher sense, a love
 That grasps the loves and happiness of millions.

Tan. Why that surmise ? Or should he love, Siffredi,
 I doubt not, it is nobly, which will raise

And animate his virtues—Oh, permit me
 To plead the cause of youth—Their virtue oft,
 In pleasure's soft enchantment lull'd a while,
 Forgets itself; it sleeps and gayly dreams,
 Till great occasion rouse it; then, all flame,
 It walks abroad, with heighten'd soul and vigour,
 And by the change astonishes the world.

' Even with a kind of sympathy, I feel
 ' The joy that waits this prince; when all the powers,
 ' Th' expanding heart can wish, of doing good;
 ' Whatever swells ambition, or exalts
 ' The human soul into divine emotions,
 ' All crowd at once upon him.

' *Sif.* Ah, my Tancred,
 ' Nothing so easy as in speculation,
 ' And at a distance seen, the course of honour,
 ' A fair delightful champain strew'd with flowers.
 ' But when the practice comes; when our fond passions,
 ' Pleasure, and pride, and self-indulgence, throw
 ' Their magic dust around, the prospect roughens:
 ' Then dreadful passes, craggy mountains rise,
 ' Cliffs to be scal'd, and torrents to be stemm'd;
 ' Then toil ensues, and perseverance stern;
 ' And endless combats with our grosser sense,
 ' Oft lost, and oft renew'd; and generous pain
 ' For others felt; and, harder lesson still!
 ' Our honest blifs for others sacrific'd;
 ' And all the rugged task of virtue quells
 ' The stoutest heart of common resolution.
 ' Few get above this turbid scene of strife.
 ' Few gain the summit, breathe that purest air,
 ' That heavenly ether, which untroubled sees
 ' The storm of vice and passion rage below.

' *Tan.* Most true, my lord. But why thus augure ill?
 ' You seem to doubt this prince. I know him not.
 ' Yet, Oh, methinks, my heart could answer for him!
 ' The juncture is so high, so strong the gale
 ' That blows from Heaven, as through the deadeft soul
 ' Might breathe the godlike energy of virtue.'

Sif. Hear him, immortal shades of his great fathers!—
 Forgive me, Sir, this trial of your heart.
 Thou! thou, art he!

Tan. Siffredi!

Sif. Tancred, thou!

Thou art the man, of all the many thousands
That toil upon the bosom of this isle
By heaven elected to command the rest,
To rule, protect them, and to make them happy!

Tan. Manfred my father! I the last support
Of the fam'd Norman line, that awes the world!
I, who this morning wander'd forth an orphan,
Outcast of all but thee, my second father!
Thus call'd to glory! to the first great lot
Of human kind!—Oh, wonder-working hand,
That, in majestic silence, sways at will
The mighty movements of unbounded nature;
Oh, grant me, heaven, the virtues to sustain
This awful burden of so many heroes!
Let me not be exalted into shame,
Set up the worthless pageant of vain grandeur.
Mean time I thank the justice of the king,
Who has my right bequeath'd me. Thee, Siffredi,
I thank thee—Oh, I ne'er enough can thank thee!
Yes, thou hast been—thou art—shalt be my father!
'Thou shalt direct my unexperienc'd years,
Shalt be the ruling head, and I the hand.

Sif. It is enough for me—to see my sovereign
Assert his virtues, and maintain his honour.

Tan. I think, my lord, you said the king committed
To you his will. I hope it is not clogg'd
With any base conditions, any clause,
To tyrannize my heart, and to Constantia
Enslave my hand devoted to another.
The hint you just now gave of that alliance,
You must imagine, wakes my fear. But know,
In this alone I will not bear dispute,
Not even from thee, Siffredi!—Let the council
Be strait assembled, and the will there open'd:
Thence issue speedy orders to convene,
This day ere noon, the senate: where those barons,
Who now are in Palermo, will attend,
To pay their ready homage to the king,
• Their rightful king, who claims his native crown,
• And will not be a king by deeds and parchments.'

Sif. I go, my liege. But once again permit me
To tell you—Now, now, is the trying crisis,
That must determine of your future reign.
Oh, with heroic rigour watch your heart!
And to the sovereign duties of the king,
Th' unequal'd pleasures of a God on earth,
Submit the common joys, the common passions,
Nay, even the virtues of the private man.

Tan. Of that no more. They not oppose, but aid,
Invigorate, cherish, and reward each other.

'The kind all-ruling wisdom is no tyrant.' [Exit *Siff.*

Tan. Now, generous Sigismunda, comes my turn
To shew my love was not of thine unworthy,
When fortune bade me blush to look to thee.

But what is fortune to the wish of love?

A miserable bankrupt! 'Oh, 'tis poor,

' 'Tis scanty all, what'er we can bestow!

'The wealth of kings is wretchedness and want!'

Quick, let me find her! taste that highest joy,

Th' exalted heart can know, the mix'd effusion

Of gratitude and love!—Behold, she comes!

Enter Sigismunda.

Tan. My fluttering soul was all on wing to find thee,
My love, my Sigismunda!

Sig. Oh, my Tancred!

Tell me, what means this mystery and gloom
That lowers around? Just now, involv'd in thought,
My father shot athwart me—You, my lord,
Seem strangely mov'd—I fear some dark event,
From the king's death, to trouble our repose,
That tender calm we in the woods of Belmont
So happily enjoy'd—Explain this hurry,
What means it? Say.

Tan. It means that we are happy!
Beyond our most romantic wishes happy!

Sig. You but perplex me more.

Tan. It means, my fairest,
That thou art queen of Sicily; and I
The happiest of mankind! 'than monarch more!'
Because with thee I can adorn my throne.
Manfred, who fell by tyrant William's rage,

Fam'd Roger's lineal issue, was my father. [Pausing.
 You droop, my love; dejected on a sudden;
 You seem to mourn my fortune—The soft tear
 Springs in thy eye—Oh, let me kiss it off—
 Why this, my Sigismunda?

Sig. Royal Tancred,
 None at your glorious fortune can like me
 Rejoice;—yet me alone, of all Sicilians,
 It makes unhappy.

Tan. I should hate it then!
 Should throw, with scorn, the splendid ruin from me!—
 No, Sigismunda, 'tis my hope with thee
 To share it, whence it draws its richest value.

Sig. You are my sovereign—I at humble distance—

Tan. Thou art my queen! the sovereign of my soul!
 ' You never reign'd with such triumphant lustre,
 ' Such winning charms as now; yet, thou art still'
 The dear, the tender, generous Sigismunda!
 ' Who, with a heart exalted far above
 ' Those selfish views that charm the common breast,
 ' Stoop'd from the height of life and courted beauty,
 ' Then, then, to love me, when I seem'd of fortune
 ' The hopeless outcast, when I had no friend,
 ' None to protect and own me, but thy father.
 ' And wouldst thou claim all goodness to thyself?
 ' Canst thou thy Tancred deem so dully form'd,
 ' Of such gross clay, just as I reach the point—
 ' A point my wildest hopes could never image---
 ' In that great moment, full of every virtue,
 ' That I should then so mean a traitor prove
 ' To the best bliss and honour of mankind,
 ' So much disgrace the human heart, as then,
 ' For the dead form of flattery and pomp,
 ' The faithless joys of courts, to quit kind truth,
 ' The cordial sweets of friendship and of love,
 ' The life of life! my all, my Sigismunda!
 ' I could upbraid thy fears, call them unkind,
 ' Cruel, unjust, an outrage to my heart,
 ' Did they not spring from love.

' *Sig.* Think not, my lord,
 ' That to such vulgar doubts I can descend.'

Your heart, I know, disdains the little thought
 Of changing with the vain, external change
 Of circumstance and fortune. ' Rather thence
 ' It would, with rising ardour, greatly feel
 ' A noble pride, to shew itself the same.'
 But, ah! the hearts of kings are not their own.
 ' There is a haughty duty that subjects them
 ' To chains of state, to wed the public welfare,
 ' And not indulge the tender, private virtues.'
 Some high-descended princess, who will bring
 New power and interest to your throne, demands
 Your royal hand—perhaps Constantia——

Tan. She!

Oh, name her not! Were I this moment free,
 And disengag'd as he who ' never felt,
 ' The powerful eye of beauty,' never sigh'd
 For matchless worth like thine, I should abhor
 All thoughts of that alliance. Her fell father
 Most basely murder'd mine; ' and she, his daughter,
 ' Supported by his barbarous party still,
 ' His pride inherits, his imperious spirit,
 ' And insolent pretensions to my throne.'
 And canst thou deem me, then, so poorly tame,
 So cool a traitor to my father's blood,
 As from the prudent cowardice of state
 E'er to submit to such a base proposal?
 ' Detested thought! Oh, doubly, doubly hateful!
 ' From the two strongest passions; from aversion
 ' To this Constantia—and from love to thee.
 ' Custom, 'tis true, a venerable tyrant,
 ' O'er servile man extends a blind dominion:
 ' The pride of kings enslaves them; their ambition,
 ' Or interest, lords it o'er the better passions.
 ' But vain their talk, mask'd under specious words
 ' Of station, duty, and of public good.'
 They whom just Heaven has to a throne exalted,
 To guard the rights and liberties of others,
 What duty binds them to betray their own?
 ' For me, my free-born heart shall bear no dictates,
 ' But those of truth and honour; wear no chains,
 ' But the dear chains of love, and Sigismunda!'

Or if, indeed, my choice must be directed
 By views of public good, whom shall I chuse
 So fit to grace, to dignify a crown,
 And beam sweet mercy on a happy people,
 As thee, my love? Whom place upon my throne
 But thee, descended from the good Siffredi?
 'Tis fit that heart be thine, which drew from him
 'Whate'er can make it worthy thy acceptance.'

Sig. Cease, cease to raise my hopes above my duty.
 Charm me no more, my Tancred!—Oh, that we
 In those blest woods, where first you won my soul,
 Had pass'd our gentle days; far from the toil
 And pomp of courts! Such is the wish of love;
 'Of love, that with delightful weakness, knows
 'No bliss, and no ambition but itself.
 'But in the world's full light, those charming dreams,
 'Those fond illusions vanish. Awful duties!
 'The tyranny of men, even your own heart,
 'Where lurks a sense your passion stifles now,
 'And proud imperious honour call you from me.'
 'Tis all in vain—You cannot hush a voice
 That murmurs here—I must not be persuaded!

Tan. [*Kneeling.*] Hear me, thou soul of all my hopes
 and wishes!

And witness Heaven, prime source of love and joy!
 Not a whole warring world combin'd against me;
 'Its pride, its splendor, its imposing forms,
 'Nor interest, nor ambition, nor the face
 'Of solemn state, not even thy father's wisdom,'
 Shall ever shake my faith to Sigismunda!

[*Trumpets and acclamations heard.*]

But, hark! the public voice to duties calls me,
 Which with unwearied zeal I will discharge;
 And thou, yes, thou, shalt be my bright reward—
 Yet—ere I go—to hush thy lovely fears, [blank,
 'Thy delicate objections— [Writes his name.] Take this
 Sign'd with my name, and give it to thy father:
 Tell him, 'tis my command, it be fill'd up
 With a most strict and solemn marriage-contract.
 How dear each tie! how charming to my soul!
 That more unites me to my Sigismunda.

For thee, and for my people's good to live,
Is all the bliss which sovereign power can give.

[*Exeunt.*

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE, *a grand saloon.*

Enter Siffredi.

SIFFREDI.

SO far 'tis well——The late king's will proceeds
Upon the plan I counsel'd; that prince Tancred
Shall make Constantia partner of his throne.
Oh, great, Oh, wish'd event! 'whence the dire seeds
' Of dark intestine broils, of civil war,
' And all its dreadful miseries and crimes,
' Shall be for ever rooted from the land.
' May these dim eyes, long blasted by the rage
' Of cruel faction and my country's woes,
' Tir'd with the toils and vanities of life,
' Behold this period, then be clos'd in peace!
But how this mighty obstacle surmount,
Which love has thrown betwixt? 'Love, that disturbs
' The schemes of wisdom still; that, wing'd with passion,
' Blind and impetuous in its fond pursuits,
' Leaves the grey-headed reason far behind.
' Alas, how frail the state of human bliss!
' When even our honest passions oft destroy it.
' I was to blame, in solitude and shades,
' Infectious scenes! to trust their youthful hearts.
' Would I had mark'd the rising flame, that now
' Burns out with dangerous force!—My daughter owns
Her passion for the king; she trembling own'd it,
With prayers, and tears, and tender supplications,
That almost shook my firmness—And this blank,
Which his rash fondness gave her, shews how much,
To what a wild extravagance he loves——
I see no means—it foils my deepest thought—
How to controul this madness of the king,
That wears the face of virtue, and will thence

Disdain

Disdain restraint, ' will, from his generous heart,
 ' Borrow new rage, even speciously oppose
 ' To reason reason'——But it must be done.
 ' My own advice, of which I more and more
 ' Approve, the strict conditions of the will,
 ' Highly demand his marriage with Constantia ;
 ' Or else her party has a fair pretence——
 ' And all, at once, is horror and confusion——
 ' How issue from this maze ?'——The crowding barons
 Here summon'd to the palace, meet already,
 To pay their homage, and confirm the will.
 On a few moments hangs the public fate,
 On a few hasty moments——Ha ! there shone
 A gleam of hope——Yes, with this very paper
 I yet will save him——' Necessary means,
 ' For good and noble ends, can ne'er be wrong.
 ' In that resistless that peculiar case,
 ' Deceit is truth and virtue——But how hold
 ' This lion in the toil ?——Oh, I will form it
 ' Of such a fatal thread, twist it so strong
 ' With all the ties of honour and of duty,
 ' That his most desperate fury shall not break
 ' The honest snare.'——Here is the royal hand——
 I will beneath it write a perfect, full,
 And absolute agreement to the will ;
 Which read before the nobles of the realm
 Assembled, in the sacred face of Sicily,
 Constantia present, every heart and eye
 Fix'd on their monarch, every tongue applauding,
 He must submit, his dream of love must vanish——
 It shall be done——To me, I know, 'tis ruin ;
 But safety to the public, to the king.
 I will not reason more, ' I will not listen
 ' Even to the voice of honour.'——No——'tis fix'd !
 I here devote me for my prince and country ;
 Let them be safe, and let me nobly perish !
 Behold, earl Osmond comes, without whose aid
 My schemes are all in vain.

Enter Osmond.

Osmond. My lord Siffredi,
 I from the council hasten'd to Constantia,
 And have accomplish'd what we there propos'd.

The princess to the will submits her claims.
 She with her presence means to grace the senate,
 And of your royal charge, young Tancred's hand,
 Accept. ' At first, indeed, it shock'd her hopes
 ' Of reigning sole, this new, surprizing scene
 ' Of Manfred's son, appointed by the king,
 ' With her joint heir——But I so fully shew'd
 ' The justice of the case, the public good,
 ' And sure establish'd peace which thence would rise,
 ' Join'd to the strong necessity that urg'd her,
 ' If on Sicilia's throne she meant to sit,
 ' As to the wise disposal of the will
 ' Her high ambition tam'd.' Methought, besides,
 I could discern, that not from prudence merely
 She to this choice submitted.

Siff. Noble Osmond,
 You have in this done to the public great
 And signal service. Yes, I must avow it ;
 ' This frank and ready instance of your zeal,
 In such a trying crisis of the state,
 ' When interest and ambition might have warp'd
 ' Your views, I own, this truly generous virtue'
 Upbraids the rashness of my former judgment.

Osmond. Siffredi, no. To you belongs the praise ;
 ' The glorious work is yours. Had I not seiz'd,
 ' Improv'd the wish'd occasion to root out
 ' Division from the land, and save my country,
 ' I had been base, been infamous for ever.'
 'Tis you, my lord, to whom the many thousands,
 That by the barbarous sword of civil war
 Had fallen inglorious, owe their lives ; ' to you
 ' The sons of this fair isle, from her first peers
 ' Down to the swain who tills her golden plains,
 ' Owe their safe homes, their soft domestic hours,
 ' And thro' late time posterity shall bless you,
 ' You who advis'd this will.'—I blush to think
 I have so long oppos'd the best good man
 In Sicily——' With what impartial care
 ' Ought we to watch o'er prejudice and passion,
 ' Nor trust too much the jaundic'd eye of party !
 ' Henceforth its vain delusions I renounce,
 ' Its hot determinations, that confine

‘ All merit and all virtue to itself.’
 To yours I join my hand ; with you will own
 No interest and no party but my country.
 Nor is your friendship only my ambition :
 There is a dearer name, the name of father,
 By which I should rejoice to call Siffredi.
 Your daughter’s hand would to the public weal
 Unite my private happiness.

Siff. My lord,
 You have my glad consent. To be allied
 To your distinguish’d family and merit,
 I shall esteem an honour. From my soul
 I here embrace earl Osmond as my friend
 And son.

Osmond. You make him happy. ‘ This assent,
 ‘ So frank and warm, to what I long have wish’d,
 ‘ Engages all my gratitude ; at once,
 ‘ In the first blossom, it matures our friendship.’
 I from this moment vow myself the friend
 And zealous servant of Siffredi’s house.

Enter an officer belonging to the court.

Off. [*To Siffredi.*] The king, my lord, demands your
 speedy presence.

Siff. I will attend him strait—Farewel, my lord :
 The senate meets : there, a few moments hence,
 I will rejoin you.

Osmond. There, my noble lord,
 We will complete this salutary work ;
 Will there begin a new auspicious æra.

[*Exeunt Siffredi and Officer.*]

Siffredi gives his daughter to my wishes—
 But does she give herself ? Gay, young, and flatter’d,
 Perhaps engag’d, will she her youthful heart
 Yield to my harsher, uncomplying years ?
 I am not form’d, by flattery and praise,
 By sighs and tears, and all the whining trade
 Of love, to feed a fair-one’s vanity ;
 To charm at once and spoil her. These soft arts
 Nor suit my years nor temper ; these be left
 To boys, and doating age. A prudent father,
 By nature charg’d to guide and rule her choice,
 Relinquishes his daughter to a husband’s power,

Who with superior dignity, with reason,
 And manly tenderness, will ever love her ;
 Not first a kneeling slave, and then a tyrant.

‘ *Enter Barons.*

‘ My lords, I greet you well. This wondrous day
 ‘ Unites us all in amity and friendship.
 ‘ We meet to-day with open hearts and looks,
 ‘ Not gloom’d by party, scouling on each other,
 ‘ But all the children of one happy isle,
 ‘ The social sons of liberty. No pride,
 ‘ No passion now, no thwarting views divide us :
 ‘ Prince Manfred’s line, at last, to William’s join’d,
 ‘ Combines us in one family of brothers.
 ‘ This to the late good king’s well-order’d will,
 ‘ And wise Siffredi’s generous care we owe.
 ‘ I truly give you joy. First of you all,
 ‘ I here renounce those errors and divisions
 ‘ That have so long disturb’d our peace, and seem’d,
 ‘ Fermenting still, to threaten new commotions—
 ‘ By time instructed, let us not disdain
 ‘ To quit mistakes. We all, my lords, have err’d.
 ‘ Men may, I find, be honest, tho’ they differ.

‘ *1 Bar.* Who follows not, my lord, the fair example
 ‘ You set us all, whate’er be his pretence,
 ‘ Loves not with single and unbiass’d heart,
 ‘ His country as he ought.

‘ *2 Bar.* Oh, beauteous peace !
 ‘ Sweet union of a state ! what else, but thou,
 ‘ Gives safety, strength, and glory to a people ?
 ‘ I bow, lord constable, beneath the snow
 ‘ Of many years ; yet in my breast revives
 ‘ A youthful flame. Methinks, I see again
 ‘ Those gentle days renew’d, that bless’d our isle,
 ‘ Ere by this wasteful fury of division,
 ‘ Worse than our Ætna’s most destructive fires,
 ‘ It desolated sunk. I see our plains
 ‘ Unbounded waving with the gifts of harvest ;
 ‘ Our seas with commerce throng’d ; our busy ports
 ‘ With chearful toil. Our Enna blooms afresh ;
 ‘ Afresh the sweets of thymy Hybla flow.
 ‘ Our nymphs and shepherds, sporting in each vale,
 ‘ Inspire new song, and wake the pastoral reed—

' The tongue of age is fond—Come, come, my sons ;
 ' I long to see this prince, of whom the world
 ' Speaks largely well—His father was my friend,
 ' The brave, unhappy Manfred—Come, my lords ;
 ' We tarry here too long.

' *Enter two Officers, keeping off the crowd.*

' *One of the crowd.* Shew us our king,
 ' The valiant Manfred's son, who lov'd the people—
 ' We must, we will behold him—Give us way.

' *1 Off.* Pray, gentlemen, give back—it must not be—
 ' Give back, I pray—on such a glad occasion,
 ' I would not ill entreat the lowest of you.

' *2 Man of the Crowd.* Nay, give us but a glimpse of
 our young king.

' We, more than any baron of them all,
 ' Will pay him true allegiance.

' *2 Off.* Friends—indeed

' You cannot pass this way—We have strict orders,
 ' To keep for him himself, and for the barons,
 ' All these apartments clear—Go to the gate
 ' That fronts the sea, you there will find admission.

' *All.* Long live king Tancred! Manfred's son--huzza!

' [*Crowd goes off.*]

Enter 1st Officer.

1 Off. My lord, the king is rob'd, the senate fits,
 And waits your presence. [*Exeunt Osmond and Barons.*
 [*Shouts within.*]

Enter 2d Officer.

2 Off. I have not seen
 So wild a tumult ; the town is mad with transport ;
 Shew us our king, they cry, our Norman king,
 The valiant Manfred's son, who lov'd the people.
 In vain I told 'em, that we had strict orders
 To keep for him himself, and for the barons,
 All these apartments clear. Nought could
 Appease their storm of zeal ; 'till at
 The northern gate, that fronts the sea,
 I promis'd them admittance.

1 Off. I do not marvel at their rage of joy :
 He is a brave and amiable prince.
 When in my lord Siffredi's house I liv'd,
 Ere by his favour I obtain'd this office,

I there

I there remember well the young count Tancred.
 To see him and to love him were the same ;
 He was so noble in his ways, yet still
 So affable and mild——Well, well, old Sicily,
 Yet happy days await thee !

2 *Off.* Grant it, Heaven !

‘ We have seen sad and troublesome times enough.’
 He is, they say, to wed the late king’s sister,
 Constantia.

1 *Off.* Friend, of that I greatly doubt.
 Or I mistake, or lord Siffredi’s daughter,
 The gentle Sigismunda, has his heart.
 If one may judge by kindly cordial looks,
 And fond assiduous care to please each other,
 Most certainly they love——Oh, be they blest,
 As they deserve ! It were great pity aught
 Should part a matchless pair ; the glory he,
 And she the blooming grace of Sicily !

2 *Off.* My lord Rodolpho comes.

Enter Rodolpho from the senate.

Rod. My honest friends,
 You may retire. [*Officers go out.*] A storm is in the wind.
 This will perplexes all. No, Tancred never
 Can stoop to these conditions, which at once
 Attack his rights, his honour, and his love.
 ‘ Those wise old men, those plodding, grave, state pedants,
 ‘ Forget the course of youth ; their crooked prudence,
 ‘ To baseness verging still, forgets to take
 ‘ Into their fine-spun schemes the generous heart,
 ‘ That thro’ the cobweb system bursting, lays
 ‘ Their labours waste——So will this business prove,
 ‘ Or I mistake the king——back from the pomp
 ‘ He seem’d at first to shrink, and round his brow
 ‘ I mark’d a gathering cloud, when, by his side,
 ‘ As if design’d to share the public homage,
 ‘ He saw the tyrant’s daughter. But confess’d,
 ‘ At least to me, the doubling tempest frown’d,
 ‘ And shook his swelling bosom,’ when he heard
 Th’ unjust, the base conditions of the will.
 Uncertain, tost in cruel agitation,
 He oft, methought, address’d himself to speak,
 And interrupt Siffredi ; who appear’d,

With conscious haste, to dread that interruption,
 And hurry'd on——But hark! I hear a noise,
 As if th' assembly rose——‘ Ha! Sigismunda,
 ‘ Oppress'd with grief, and wrapp'd in pensive sorrow,
 ‘ Passes along.

‘ [Sigismunda and attendants pass thro' the back scene.]

Enter Laura.

Lau. Your high-prais'd friend, the king,
 Is false, most vilely false. The meanest slave
 Had shewn a nobler heart; ‘ nor grossly thus,
 ‘ By the first bait ambition spread, been gull'd.’
 He Manfred's son! away! it cannot be!
 The son of that brave prince could ne'er ‘ betray
 ‘ Those rights so long usurp'd from his great father,
 ‘ Which he, this day, by such amazing fortune,
 ‘ Had just regain'd: he ne'er could' sacrifice
 All faith, all honour, gratitude and love,
 ‘ Even just resentment of his father's fate,
 ‘ And pride itself; whate'er exalts a man
 ‘ Above the groveling sons of peasant mud,’
 All in a moment——And for what? why, truly,
 For kind permission, gracious leave, to sit
 On his own throne, with tyrant William's daughter!

Rod. I stand amaz'd——You surely wrong him, Laura.
 There must be some mistake.

Laur. There can be none!
 Siffredi read his full and free consent
 Before th' applauding senate. True indeed,
 A small remain of shame, a timorous weakness,
 Even dastardly in falsehood, made him blush
 To act this scene in Sigismunda's eye,
 Who sunk beneath his perfidy and baseness.
 Hence, till to-morrow he adjourn'd the senate!
 To-morrow, fix'd with infamy to crown him!
 Then, leading off his gay, triumphant princess,
 He left the poor, unhappy Sigismunda,
 To bend her trembling steps to that sad home
 His faithless vows will render hateful to her——
 He comes——Farewel——I cannot bear his presence!

[*Exit Laura.*]

Enter Tancred and Siffredi, meeting.

Tan. Avoid me, hoary traitor!——Go, Rodolpho,

Give

Give orders that all passages this way
 Be shut—Defend me from a hateful world,
 The bane of peace and honour—then return—[*Ex. Rod.*
 What! dost thou haunt me still? Oh, monstrous insult!
 Unparallel'd indignity! Just Heaven!
 Was ever king, was ever man so treated;
 So trampled into baseness?

Siff. Here, my liege,
 Here strike! I nor deserve, nor ask for mercy. [hold
 ‘*Tan.* Distraction!—Oh, my soul!—Hold, reason,
 ‘Thy giddy feat—Oh, this inhuman outrage
 ‘Unhinges thought!

‘*Siff.* Exterminate thy servant.’
Tan. All, all but this I could have borne—but this!
 This daring insolence beyond example!
 This murderous stroke, that stabs my peace for ever!
 That wounds me there—there! where the human heart
 Most exquisitely feels——

Siff. Oh, bear it not,
 My royal lord; appease on me your vengeance!

Tan. Did ever tyrant image aught so cruel!
 The lowest slave that crawls upon the earth,
 Robb'd of each comfort Heaven bestows on mortals,
 On the bare ground has still his virtue left,
 The sacred treasure of an honest heart,
 Which thou hast dar'd, with rash, audacious hand,
 And impious fraud, in me to violate——

Siff. Behold, my lord, that rash, audacious hand,
 Which not repents its crime——Oh, glorious, happy!
 If by my ruin I can save your honour.

Tan. Such honour I renounce; with sovereign scorn
 Greatly detest it, and its mean adviser!

Hast thou not dar'd beneath my name to shelter
 ‘My name, for other purposes design'd,
 ‘Given from the fondness of a faithful heart,
 ‘With the best love o'erflowing!—Hast thou not,’
 Beneath thy sovereign's name, basely presum'd
 To shield a lie—a lie, in public utter'd,
 To all deluded Sicily? But know,
 This poor contrivance is as weak as base.

‘In such a wretched toil none can be held:

‘But fools and cowards——Soon thy flimsy arts,

' Touch'd by my just, my burning indignation,
 ' Shall burst like threads in flame--Thy doating prudence
 ' But more secures the purpose it would shake.
 ' Had my resolves been wavering and doubtful,
 ' This would confirm them, make them fix'd as fate ;
 ' This adds the only motive that was wanting
 ' To urge them on thro' war and desolation.'

What! marry her! Constantia! her! the daughter
 Of the fell tyrant who destroy'd my father!

The very thought is madness! Ere thou seest
 The torch of Hymen light these hated nuptials,
 Thou shalt behold Sicilia wrapt in flames,
 Her cities raz'd, her vallies drench'd with slaughter—
 Love set aside, my pride assumes the quarrel ;
 My honour now is up; in spite of thee,
 A world combin'd against me, I will give
 This scatter'd will in fragments to the winds,
 Assert my rights, the freedom of my heart,
 Crush all who dare oppose me to the dust,
 And heap perdition on thee!

Siff. Sir, 'tis just.

Exhaust on me your rage; I claim it all.
 But for these public threats thy passion utters,
 'Tis what thou canst not do.

Tan. I cannot! ha!

' Driven to the dreadful brink of such dishonour,
 ' Enough to make the tameest coward brave,
 ' And into fierceness rouse the mildest nature,'
 What shall arrest my vengeance? Who?

Siff. Thyself.

Tan. Away! Dare not to justify thy crime!
 That, that alone can aggravate its horror,
 Add insolence to insolence—perhaps
 May make my rage forget—

Siff. Oh, let it burst

On this grey head, devoted to thy service!
 But when the storm has vented all its fury,
 Thou then must hear—nay more, I know thou wilt—
 Wilt hear the calm, yet stronger voice of reason.

' Thou must reflect that a whole people's safety,
 ' The weal of trusted millions, should bear down,
 ' Thyself the judge, the fondest partial pleasure.'

Thou must reflect that there are other duties,
 ' A nobler pride, a more exalted honour,
 ' Superior pleasures far, that will oblige,
 ' Compel thee, to abide by this my deed,
 ' Unwarranted perhaps in common justice,
 ' But which necessity, ev'n virtue's tyrant,
 ' With awful voice commanded'—Yes, thou must,
 In calmer hours, divest thee of thy love,
 These common passions of the vulgar breast,
 This boiling heat of youth, and be a king,
 The lover of thy people!

Tan. ' Truths, ill employ'd,
 ' Abus'd to colour guilt!—A king! a king!
 Yes, I will be a king, but not a slave;
 In this will be a king; in this my people
 Shall learn to judge how I will guard their rights,
 When they behold me vindicate my own.
 But have I, say, been treated like a king?—
 Heavens! could I stoop to such outrageous usage,
 I were a mean, a shameless wretch, unworthy
 To wield a sceptre in a land of slaves,
 A foil abhorr'd of virtue; should belie
 My father's blood, belie those very maxims,
 At other times, you taught my youth——Siffredi!

[*In a soften'd tone of voice.*]

Siff. Behold, my prince, thy poor old servant,
 Whose darling care, these twenty years, has been
 To nurse thee up to virtue; ' who, for thee,
 ' Thy glory, and thy weal, renounces all,
 ' All interest or ambition can pour forth;
 ' What many a selfish father would pursue
 ' Thro' treachery and crimes:' behold him here,
 Bent on his feeble knees, to beg, conjure thee,
 With tears to beg thee to controul thy passion,
 And save thyself, thy honour, and thy people!
 Kneeling with me, behold the many thousands
 To thy protection trusted; fathers, mothers,
 The sacred front of venerable age,
 The tender virgin, and the helpless infant;
 ' The ministers of Heaven, those who maintain,
 ' Around thy throne, the majesty of rule;
 ' And those, whose labour, scorch'd by winds and sun,

' Feeds the rejoicing public ;' see them all,
 Here at thy feet, conjuring thee to save them
 From misery and war, from crimes and rapine !
 ' Can there be aught, kind Heaven, in self-indulgence
 ' To weigh down these, this aggregate of love,
 ' With which compar'd, the dearest private passion
 ' Is but the wasted dust upon the balance ?'

Turn not away——Oh, is there not some part
 In thy great heart, so sensible to kindness
 And generous warmth, some nobler part, to feel
 The prayers and tears of these, the mingled voice
 Of Heaven and earth ?

Tan. There is, and thou hast touch'd it.

Rise, rise, Siffredi——Oh, thou hast undone me !
 Unkind old man !——Oh, ill-entreated Tancred !

Which way foe'er I turn, dishonour rears
 Her hideous front—and misery and ruin.

' Was it for this you took such care to form me ?'
 ' For this imbued me with the quickest sense
 ' Of shame ; these finer feelings, that ne'er vex
 ' The common mass of mortals, dully happy
 ' In blest'd insensibility ? Oh, rather
 ' You should have fear'd my heart, taught me that power
 ' And splendid interest lord it still o'er virtue ;
 ' That, gilded by prosperity and pride,
 ' There is no shame, no meanness ; temper'd thus,
 ' I had been fit to rule a venal world.

' Alas ! what meant thy wantonness of prudence ?'

Why have you rais'd this miserable conflict

Betwixt the duties of the king and man ?

Set virtue against virtue ?——' Ah, Siffredi !

' 'Tis thy superfluous, thy unfeeling wisdom,

' That has involv'd me in a maze of error

' Almost beyond retreat'——But hold, my soul ;

Thy steady purpose——To st by various passions,

To this eternal anchor keep——There is,

Can be no public without private virtue——

Then, mark me well, observe what I command ;

' It is the sole expedient now remaining——'

To-morrow, when the senate meets again,

Unfold the whole, unravel the deceit ;

' Nor that alone ; try to repair its mischief ;

' There all thy power, thy eloquence and interest
 ' Exert to reinstate me in my rights,
 ' And from thy own dark snares to disembroil me.'—
 Start not, my lord—This must and shall be done!
 Or here our friendship ends—Howe'er disguis'd,
 Whatever thy pretence, thou art a traitor.

Siff. I should indeed deserve the name of traitor,
 And even a traitor's fate, had I so slightly,
 From principles so weak, done what I did,
 As e'er to disavow it——

Tan. Ha!

Siff. My liege,
 Expect not this——Tho' practis'd long in courts,
 I have not so far learn'd their subtle trade,
 To veer obedient with each gust of passion.
 I honour thee, I venerate thy orders,
 But honour more my duty. Nought on earth
 Shall ever shake me from that solid rock,
 Nor smiles, nor frowns.——

Tan. You will not then?

Siff. I cannot.

Tan. Away! begone!——Oh, my Rodolpho, come,
 And save me from this traitor!—Hence, I say.

' Avoid my presence strait! and know, old man,
 ' Thou, my worst foe beneath the mask of friendship,
 ' Who, not content to trample in the dust
 ' My dearest rights, dost with cool insolence
 ' Persist, and call it duty; hadst thou not
 ' A daughter that protects thee, thou shouldst feel
 ' The vengeance thou deservest.'——No reply!
 Away!

[*Ex. Siff.*]

Enter Rodolpho.

Rod. What can incense my prince so highly
 Against his friend Siffredi!

Tan. Friend! Rodolpho?

When I have told thee what this friend has done,
 How play'd me like a boy, a base-born wretch,
 Who had nor heart nor spirit, thou wilt stand
 Amaz'd, and wonder at my stupid patience.

' *Rod.* I heard, with mix'd astonishment and grief,
 ' The king's unjust, dishonourable will,
 ' Void in itself—I saw you stung with rage,

' And

- ' And writhing in the snare ; just as I went,
 ' At your command, to wait you here—but that
 ' Was the king's deed, not his.
 ' *Tan.* Oh, he advis'd it !
 ' These many years he has in secret hatch'd
 ' This black contrivance, glories in the scheme,
 ' And proudly plumes him with his traiterous virtue.
 ' But that was nought, Rodolpho, nothing, nothing !
 ' Oh, that was gentle, blameless to what follow'd !
 ' I had, my friend, to Sigismunda given,
 ' To hush her fears, in the full gush of fondness,
 ' A blank, sign'd with my hand—and he, Oh, Heavens !
 ' Was ever such a wild attempt !—he wrote
 ' Beneath my name an absolute compliance
 ' To this detested will ; nay, dar'd to read it
 ' Before myself, on my insulted throne
 ' His idle pageant plac'd — Oh, words are weak
 ' To paint the pangs, the rage, the indignation,
 ' That whirl'd from thought to thought my soul in tem-
 ' Now on the point to burst, and now by shame [pest,
 ' Repress'd—But in the face of Sicily,
 ' All mad with acclamation, what, Rodolpho,
 ' What could I do ? The sole relief that rose
 ' To my distracted mind, was to adjourn
 ' Th' assembly till to-morrow—But to-morrow
 ' What can be done ?---Oh, it avails not what !
 ' I care not what is done---My only care
 ' Is how to clear my faith to Sigismunda.
 ' She thinks me false ! She cast a look that kill'd me !
 ' Oh ! I am base in Sigismunda's eye !
 ' The lowest of mankind, the most perfidious !
 ' *Rod.* This was a strain of insolence indeed,
 ' A daring outrage of so strange a nature
 ' As stuns me quite——
 ' *Tan.* Curs'd be my timid prudence,
 ' That dash'd not back, that moment in his face,
 ' The bold presumptuous lie !---and curs'd this hand,
 ' That from a start of poor dissimulation,
 ' Led off my Sigismunda's hated rival,
 ' Ah, then ! what, poison'd by the false appearance,
 ' What, Sigismunda, were thy thoughts of me ?
 ' How, in the silent bitterness of soul,

' How didst thou scorn me ! hate mankind, thyself,
 ' For trusting to the vows of faithless Tancred ?
 ' For such I seem'd---I was---the thought distracts me ?
 ' I should have cast a flattering world aside,
 ' Rush'd from my throne, before them all avow'd her,
 ' The choice, the glory of my free-born heart
 ' And spurn'd the shameful fetters thrown upon it---
 ' Instead of that---confusion !---what I did
 ' Has clinch'd the chain, confirm'd Siffredi's crime.
 ' And fix'd me down to infamy !

' *Rod.* My lord,

' Blame not the conduct which your situation
 ' Tore from your tortur'd heart---What could you do ?
 ' Had you, so circumstanc'd, in open senate,
 ' Before th' astonish'd public, with no friends
 ' Prepar'd, no party form'd, affronted thus,
 ' The haughty princess and her powerful faction,
 ' Supported by this will, the sudden stroke,
 ' Abrupt and premature, might have recoil'd
 ' Upon yourself, even your own friends revolted,
 ' And turn'd at once the public scale against you.
 ' Besides, consider, had you then detected
 ' In its fresh guilt this action of Siffredi,
 ' You must with signal vengeance have chastis'd
 ' The treasonable deed---Nothing so mean
 ' As weak insulted power that dares not punish.
 ' And how would that have suited with your love ;
 ' His daughter present too ? Trust me, your conduct,
 ' Howe'er abhorrent to a heart like yours,
 ' Was fortunate and wise---Not that I mean
 ' E'er to advise submission-----

' *Tan.* Heavens ! submission !

' Could I descend to bear it, even in thought,
 ' Despise me, you, the world, and Sigismunda !
 ' Submission !---No !---To-morrow's glorious light
 ' Shall flash discovery on the scene of baseness.
 ' Whatever be the risque, by Heavens, to-morrow,
 ' I will o'erturn the dirty lie-built schemes
 ' Of these old men, and shew my faithful senate,
 ' That Manfred's son knows to assert and wear,
 ' With undiminish'd dignity, that crown
 ' This unexpected day has plac'd upon him.'

But this, my friend, ' these stormy gusts of pride
 ' Are foreign to my love——Till Sigismunda
 ' Be disabus'd, my breast is tumult all,
 ' And can obey no settled course of reason.
 ' I see her still, I feel her powerful image,
 ' That look, where with reproach complaint was mix'd,
 ' Big with soft woe, and gentle indignation,
 ' Which seem'd at once to pity and to scorn me——
 ' Oh, let me find her! I too long have left
 ' My Sigismunda to converse with tears,
 ' A prey to thoughts that picture me a villain.
 ' But ah! how, clogg'd with this accursed state,
 ' A tedious world, shall I now find access?
 ' Her father too---Ten thousand horrors crowd
 ' Into the wild, fantastic eye of love——
 ' Who knows what he may do? Come then, my friend,
 ' And by thy sister's hand, Oh, let me steal
 ' A letter to her bosom---I no longer
 ' Can bear her absence, by the just contempt
 ' She now must brand me with, inflam'd to madness.
 ' Fly, my Rodolpho, fly! engage thy sister
 ' To aid my letter.' *This black, unheard-of outrage,*
I cannot now impart——'Till Sigismunda
Be disabus'd, my breast is tumult all.
Come, then, my friend, and by the hand of Laura,
Oh, let me steal a letter to her bosom,
 And this ' very' evening
 Secure an interview---I would not bear
 This rack another day, not for my kingdom.
 ' Till then, deep plung'd in solitude and shades,
 ' I will not see the hated face of man.'
 Thought drives on thought, on passions passions roll;
 Her smiles alone can calm my raging soul.

[Exeunt.]

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE, *a chamber.**Sigismunda alone, sitting in a disconsolate posture.*

A H, tyrant prince ! ah, more than faithless Tancred !
 Ungenerous and inhuman in thy falshood !
 Hadst thou, this morning, when my hopeless heart,
 Submissive to my fortune and my duty,
 Had so much spirit left, as to be willing
 To give thee back thy vows, ah ! hadst thou then
 Confess'd the sad necessity thy state
 Impos'd upon thee, and with gentle friendship,
 Since we must part at last, our parting soften'd ;
 I should indeed---I should have been unhappy,
 But not to this extreme---' Amidst my grief,
 ' I had, with pensive pleasure, cherish'd still
 ' The sweet remembrance of thy former love,
 ' Thy image still had dwelt upon my soul,
 ' And made our guiltless woes not undelightful.
 ' But coolly thus---How couldst thou be so cruel ?---
 ' Thus to revive my hopes, to sooth my love
 ' And call forth all its tenderness, then sink me
 ' In black despair---What unrelenting pride
 ' Possess'd thy breast, that thou couldst bear unmov'd
 ' To see me bent beneath a weight of shame ?
 ' Pangs thou canst never feel ! How couldst thou drag me,
 ' In barbarous triumph at a rival's car ?
 ' How ! make me witness to a sight of horror ?
 ' That hand, which, but a few short hours ago,
 ' So wantonly abus'd my simple faith,
 ' Before th' attesting world given to another,
 ' Irrevocably given !---There was a time,
 ' When the least cloud that hung upon my brow,
 ' Perhaps imagin'd only, touch'd thy pity.
 ' Then, brighten'd often by the ready tear,
 ' Thy looks were softness all ; then the quick heart,
 ' In every nerve alive, forgot itself,
 ' And for each other then we felt alone.
 ' But now, alas ! those tender days are fled ;
 ' Now thou canst see me wretched, pierc'd with anguish,
 ' With studied anguish of thy own creating,

' Nor wet thy harden'd eye---Hold, let me think---
 ' I wrong thee sure; thou canst not be so base,
 ' As meanly in my misery to triumph ---
 ' What is it then?---'Tis fickleness of nature,
 ' 'Tis sickly love extinguish'd by ambition---'
 Is there, kind heaven, no constancy in man?
 No steadfast truth, no generous fix'd affection,
 'That can bear up against a selfish world?
 No, there is none---Even Tancred is inconstant!

[*Rising.*

Hence! let me fly this scene!---Whate'er I see,
 These roofs, these walls, each object that surrounds me,
 Are tainted with his vows---But whither fly?
 The groves are worse, the soft retreat of Belmont,
 Its deepening glooms, gay lawns, and airy summits,
 Will wound my busy memory to torture,
 And all its shades will whisper---faithless Tancred!---
 My father comes---How, sunk in this disorder,
 Shall I sustain his presence?

Enter Siffredi.

Sif. Sigismunda,
 My dearest child! I grieve to find thee thus
 A prey to tears. ' I know the powerful cause
 ' From which they flow, and therefore can excuse them,
 ' But not their wilful obstinate continuance.
 ' Come, rouse thee then, call up thy drooping spirit,'
 Awake to reason from this dream of love,
 And shew the world thou art Siffredi's daughter.

Sig. Alas! I am unworthy of that name.

Sif. Thou art indeed to blame; thou hast too rashly
 Engag'd thy heart, without a father's sanction.
 But this I can forgive. ' The king has virtues,
 ' That plead thy full excuse; nor was I void
 ' Of blame, to trust thee to those dangerous virtues.
 ' Then dread not my reproaches. 'Tho' he blames,
 ' Thy tender father pities more than blames thee.
 ' Thou art my daughter still;' and, if thy heart
 Will now resume its pride, assert itself,
 And greatly rise superior to this trial,
 I to my warmest confidence again
 Will take thee, and esteem thee more my daughter.

Sig. Oh, you are gentler far than I deserve!
 It is, it ever was, my darling pride,

To bend my soul to your supreme commands,
 Your wisest will ; and tho' by love betray'd—
 Alas ! and punish'd too---I have transgress'd
 The nicest bounds of duty, yet I feel
 A sentiment of tenderness, a source
 Of filial nature springing in my breast,
 That should it kill me, shall controul this passion,
 And make me all submission and obedience
 To you my honoured lord, the best of fathers.

Sif. Come to my arms, thou comfort of my age !
 Thou only joy and hope of these grey hairs !
 Come, let me take thee to a parent's heart ;
 There, with the kindly aid of my advice,
 Even with the dew of these paternal tears,
 Revive and nourish this becoming spirit—
 Then thou dost promise me, my Sigismunda—
 Thy father stoops to make it his request—
 Thou wilt resign thy fond presumptuous hopes,
 And henceforth never more indulge one thought
 That in the light of love regards the king ?

Sig. Hopes I have none !—Those by this fatal day
 Are blasted all—But from my soul to banish
 While weeping memory there retains her seat,
 Thoughts which the purest bosom might have cherish'd,
 Once my delight, now even in anguish charming,
 Is more, alas ! my lord, than I can promise.

Sif. Absence and time, the softener of our passions,
 Will conquer this. Mean time, I hope from thee
 A generous great effort ; that thou wilt now
 Exert thy utmost force, nor languish thus
 Beneath the vain extravagance of love.
 Let not thy father blush to hear it said,
 His daughter was so weak, e'er to admit
 A thought so void of reason, that a king
 Should to his rank, his honour and his glory,
 The high important duties of a throne,
 Even to his throne itself, madly prefer
 A wild romantic passion, the fond child
 Of youthful dreaming thought and vacant hours ;
 That he should quit his heaven-appointed station,
 Desert his awful charge, the care of all
 ' The toiling millions which this isle contains ;

' Nay more, should plunge them into war and ruin
 ' And all to soothe a sick imagination,
 ' A miserable weakness'—*What* must for thee,
 To make thee blest, Sicilia be unhappy?
 ' The king himself, lost to the nobler sense
 ' Of manly praise, become the piteous hero
 ' Of some soft tale, and rush on sure destruction?
 ' Canst thou, my daughter, let the monstrous thought
 ' Possess one moment thy perverted fancy?'
 Rouse thee, for shame! and if a spark of virtue
 Lies slumbering in thy soul, bid it blaze forth;
 Nor sink unequal to the glorious lesson,
 This day thy lover gave thee from his throne.

Sig. Ah, that was not from virtue!—Had, my father,
 That been his aim, I yield to what you say;
 ' 'Tis powerful truth, unanswerable reason.
 ' Then, then, with sad but dutious resignation,
 ' I had submitted as became your daughter;
 ' But in that moment, when my humbled hopes
 ' Were to my duty reconcil'd, to raise them
 ' To yet a fonder height than e'er they knew,
 ' Then rudely dash them down---There is the sting!
 ' The blasting view is ever present to me---'
 Why did you drag me to a fight so cruel?

Sif. It was a scene to fire thy emulation.

Sig. It was a scene of perfidy!---But know,
 I will do more than imitate the king—
 For he is false!---I, though sincerely pierc'd
 With the best, truest passion, ever touch'd,
 A virgin's breast, here vow to heaven and you,
 Though from my heart I cannot, from my hopes
 To cast this prince---What would you more, my father?

Sif. Yes, one thing more---thy father then is happy---
 ' Though by the voice of innocence and virtue
 ' Absolv'd, we live not to ourselves alone:
 ' A rigorous world, with peremptory sway,
 ' Subjects us all, and even the noblest most.'
 This world from thee, my honour and thy own,
 Demands one step; a step, by which, convinc'd,
 The king may see thy heart disdains to wear
 A chain which his has greatly thrown aside,
 ' 'Tis fitting too, thy sex's pride commands thee,

‘ To shew th’ approving world thou can’st resign,
 ‘ As well as he, nor with inferior spirit,
 ‘ A passion fatal to the public weal.’

But above all, thou must root out for ever
 From the king’s breast the least remain of hope,
 And henceforth make his mentioned love dishonour.
 These things, my daughter, that must needs be done,
 Can but this way be done---by the safe refuge,
 The sacred shelter of a husband’s arms.

And there is one---

Sig. Good heavens! what means my lord?

Sif. One of illustrious family, high rank,
 Yet still of higher dignity and merit,
 Who can and will protect thee; one to awe
 The king himself---Nay, hear me, Sigismunda---
 The noble Osmond courts thee for his bride,
 And has my plighted word --This day---

Sig. [*Kneeling.*] My father!

Let me with trembling arms embrace thy knees!
 Oh, if you ever wish to see me happy;
 If e’er in infant years I gave you joy,
 When, as I prattling twin’d around your neck,
 You snatch’d me to your bosom, kiss’d my eyes,
 And melting said you saw my mother there;
 Oh, save me from that worst severity
 Of fate! Oh, outrage not my breaking heart
 To that degree!---I cannot!---’tis impossible!---
 So soon withdraw it, give it to another---

‘ Hear me, my dearest father; hear the voice
 ‘ Of nature and humanity, that plead
 ‘ As well as justice for me!---Not to chuse
 ‘ Without your wise direction may be duty;
 ‘ But still my choice is free---That is a right,
 ‘ Which even the lowest slave can never lose.
 ‘ And would you thus degrade me? make me base?
 ‘ For such it were to give my worthless person
 ‘ Without my heart, an injury to Osmond,
 ‘ The highest can be done’---Let me, my lord---

Or I shall die, shall, by the sudden change,
 Be to distraction shock’d---Let me wear out
 My hapless days in solitude and silence,
 Far from the malice of a prying world;

At least—you cannot sure refuse me this—
 Give me a little time---I will do all,
 All I can do, to please you!---' Oh, your eye
 ' Sheds a kind beam—'

Sif. My daughter! you abuse
 The softness of my nature—

Sig. Here, my father,
 Till you relent, here will I grow for ever!

Sif. Rise, Sigismunda.--- Though you touch my heart,
 Nothing can shake th' inexorable dictates
 Of honour, duty, and determin'd reason.
 Then by the holy ties of filial love,
 Resolve, I charge thee, to receive earl Osmond,
 As suits the man who is thy father's choice,
 And worthy of thy hand---I go to bring him---

Sig. Spare me, my dearest father!

Sif. [*Aside.*] I must rush

From her soft grasp, or nature will betray me!
 ' Oh, grant us, heaven! that fortitude of mind,
 ' Which listens to our duty, not our passions---
 Quit me, my child!

Sig. You cannot, Oh, my father!

You cannot leave me thus!

Sif. Come hither, Laura,

Come to thy friend. Now shew thyself a friend.
 Combat her weakness; dissipate her tears;
 Cherish, and reconcile her to her duty. [*Exit Siff.*]

Enter Laura.

Sig. Oh, woe on woe! distress'd by love and duty!
 Oh, every way unhappy Sigismunda!

Lau. Forgive me, Madam, if I blame your grief.
 How can you waste your tears on one so false?
 Unworthy of your tenderness? to whom
 Nought but contempt is due and indignation?

Sig. You know not half the horrors of my fate!
 I might perhaps have learn'd to scorn his falshood;
 Nay, when the first sad burst of tears was past,
 I might have rous'd my pride and scorn'd himself—
 But 'tis too much, this greatest last misfortune---
 Oh, whither shall I fly? Where hide me, Laura,
 From the dire scene my father now prepares?

Lau. What thus alarms you, Madam?

Sig. Can it be?

Can I — ah, no! — at once give to another,
My violated heart? in one wild moment?
He brings earl Osmond to receive my vows.

Oh, dreadful change! for Tancred, haughty Osmond.

Lau. Now, on my soul, 'tis what an outrag'd heart
Like yours, should wish! — I should, by heavens,
esteem it

Most exquisite revenge!

Sig. Revenge! on whom?

On my own heart, already but too wretched!

Lau. On him! this Tancred! who has basely fold,
For the dull form of despicable grandeur,
His faith, his love! — At once a slave and tyrant!

Sig. Oh, rail at me, at my believing folly,
My vain ill-founded hopes, but spare him, Laura.

Lau. Who rais'd these hopes? who triumphs o'er that
weakness?

Pardon the word — You greatly merit him;
Better than him, with all his giddy pomp;
You rais'd him by your smiles when he was nothing.
Where is your woman's pride, that guardian spirit
Given us to dash the perfidy of man?
Ye powers! I cannot bear the thought with patience —
' Yet recent from the most unsparing vows
' The tongue of love e'er lavish'd; from your hopes
' So vainly, idly, cruelly deluded;' —
Before the public thus, before your father,
By an irrevocable solemn deed,
With such inhuman scorn, to throw you from him;
To give his faithless hand yet warm from thine,
With complicated meannesses, to Constantia.
And, to complete his crime, when thy weak limbs
Could scarce support thee, then, of thee regardless,
To lead her off.

Sig. That was indeed a fight

To poison love; to turn it into rage
And keen contempt. — What means this stupid weakness
That hangs upon me? Hence, unworthy tears!
Disgrace my cheek no more! No more, my heart,
For one so coolly false or meanly fickle —
' Oh, it imports not which' — dare to suggest

The least excuse!---Yes, traitor, I will wring
Thy pride, will turn thy triumph to confusion!

‘ I will not pine away my days for thee,
‘ Sighing to brooks and groves; while, with vain pity,
‘ You in a rival’s arms lament my fate—
‘ No, let me perish! ere I tamely be
‘ That soft, that patient, gentle Sigismunda,
‘ Who can console her with the wretched boast,
‘ She was for thee unhappy!—If I am,
‘ I will be nobly so!’—Sicilia’s daughters
Shall wondering see in me a great example
Of one who punish’d an ill-judging heart,
Who made it bow to what it most abhorr’d!
Crush’d it to misery! for having thus
So lightly listen’d to a worthless lover!

Lau. At last it mounts, the kindling pride of virtue;
Trust me, thy marriage will embitter his—

Sig. Oh, may the furies light his nuptial torch!
Be it accurs’d as mine! for the fair peace,
The tender joys of hymeneal love,
May jealousy awak’d, and fell remorse,
Pour all their fiercest venom through his breast!---
Where the fates lead, and blind revenge, I follow.—
Let me not think—By injur’d love! I vow,
Thou shalt, base prince! perfidious and inhuman!
That shalt behold me in another’s arms;
In his thou hatest! Osmond’s!

Lau. ‘ That will grind
‘ His heart with secret rage;’ Ay, that will sting
His soul to madness; ‘ set him up a terror,
‘ A spectacle of woe to faithless lovers!’—
Your cooler thought, besides, will of the change
Approve, and think it happy. Noble Osmond
‘ From the same stock with him derives his birth,
‘ First of Sicilian barons, prudent, brave,
‘ Of strictest honour, and by all rever’d—’

Sig. Talk not of Osmond, but perfidious Tancred!
Rail at him, rail! invent new names of scorn!
Assist me, Laura; lend my rage fresh fuel;
Support my staggering purpose, which already
Begins to fail me---Ah, my vaunts how vain!
How have I ly’d to my own heart!—Alas,

My tears return, the mighty flood o'erwhelms me!

'Ten thousand crowding images distract
'My tortur'd thought——And is it come to this?
'Our hopes, our vows, our oft repeated wishes,
'Breath'd from the fervent soul, and full of heaven,
'To make each other happy——come to this!'

Lau. If thy own peace and honour cannot keep
Thy resolution fix'd, yet, Sigismunda,
Oh, think, how deeply, how beyond retreat,
Thy father is engag'd.

Sig. Ah, wretched weakness!

That thus enthrals my soul, 'that chafes thence
'Each nobler thought, the sense of every duty?'
And have I then no tears for thee, my father?
Can I forget thy cares, from helpless years,
Thy tenderness for me? 'an eye still beam'd
'With love; a brow that never knew a frown;
'Nor a harsh word thy tongue?' Shall I for these
Repay thy stooping venerable age,
With shame, disquiet, anguish, and dishonour?
It must not be!---Thou first of angels! come,
Sweet filial piety, and firm my breast!
Yes, let one daughter to her fate submit,
Be nobly wretched---but her father happy!——
Laura!---they come!---Oh, heavens, I cannot stand
The horrid trial!---Open, open earth!
And hide me from their view.

Lau. Madam.

Enter Siffredi and Osmond.

Sif. My daughter,

Behold my noble friend who courts thy hand,
And whom to call my son I shall be proud;
'Nor shall I less be pleas'd in his alliance,
'To see thee happy.'

Os. Think not, I presume,

Madam, on this your father's kind consent,
To make me blest. I love you from a heart,
That seeks your good superior to my own;
And will by every art of tender friendship,
Consult your dearest welfare. May I hope,
Yours does not disavow your father's choice?

Sig.

Sig. I am a daughter, Sir---and have no power
O'er my own heart---I die---Support me, Laura. [*Faints.*

Sif. Help---Bear her off---She breathes---my daughter!

Sig. Oh,

Forgive my weakness---soft---my Laura, lead me---
To my apartment. [*Exeunt Sig. and Laura.*

Sif. Pardon me, my lord,
If by this sudden accident alarm'd,
I leave you for a moment.

[*Exit Siff.*

Ofm. Let me think——

What can this mean?——Is it to me averſion?
Or is it, as I fear'd, ſhe loves another?

Ha!---yes---perhaps the king, the young count Tancred;
They were bred up together——Surely that,
That cannot be---Has he not given his hand,
In the moſt ſolemn manner, to Conſtantia?
Does not his crown depend upon the deed?

' No---if they lov'd, and this old ſtateſman knew it,

' He could not to a king prefer a ſubject.

' His virtues I eſteem---nay more, I truſt them——

' So far as virtue goes-- but could he place

' His daughter on the throne of Sicily——

' Oh, tis a glorious bribe, too much for man!'

What is it then?—I care not what it be.

' My honour now, my dignity demands,

' That my propos'd alliance, by her father,

' And even herſelf accepted, be not ſcorn'd.

' I love her too—I never knew till now

' To what a pitch I love her. Oh, ſhe ſhot

' Ten thouſand charms into my inmoſt ſoul!

' She look'd ſo mild, ſo amiably gentle,

' She bow'd her head, ſhe glow'd with ſuch confuſion,

' Such lovelineſs of modeſty! She is,

' In gracious mind, in manners, and in perſon,

' The perfect model of all female beauty!'

She muſt be mine---She is!—If yet her heart

Conſents not to my happineſs, her duty,

Join'd to my tender cares, will gain ſo much

Upon her generous nature—That will follow.

The man of of ſenſe, who acts a prudent part,
Not flattering ſteals, but forms himſelf the heart. [*Exit.*

END of the THIRD ACT.

ACT

A C T IV.

SCENE, *the Garden belonging to Siffredi's House.**Enter Sigismunda and Laura.*SIGISMUNDA, *with a letter in her hand.*

TIS done!—I am a slave!—The fatal vow
Has pass'd my lips!—Methought in those sad
moments,

The tombs around, the faints, the darken'd altar,
And all the trembling shrines with horror shook.
But here is still new matter of distress.

Oh, Tancred, cease to persecute me more!

Oh, grudge me not some calmer state of woe;

Some quiet gloom to shade my hopeless days,

Where I may never hear of love and thee!—

Has Laura too, conspir'd against my peace?

Why did you take this letter?—Bear it back—

I will not court new pain.

[*Giving her the letter.*]

Lau. Madam, Rodolpho

Urg'd me so much, nay, even with tears conjur'd me,

But this once more to serve th' unhappy king—

For such he said he was—that tho' enrag'd,

Equal with thee, at his inhuman falsehood,

I could not to my brother's fervent prayers

Refuse this office—Read it—His excuses

Will only more expose his falsehood.

Sig. No:

It suits not Osmond's wife to read one line

From that contagious hand—she knows too well!

Lau. He paints him out distress'd beyond expression,

Even on the point of madness. 'Wild as winds,

'And fighting seas, he raves. His passions mix,

'With ceaseless rage, all in each giddy moment.'

He dies to see you, and to clear his faith.

Sig. Save me from that!—That would be worse than

Lau. I but report my brother's words; who then [all!

Began to talk of some dark imposition,

That had deceiv'd us all; when, interrupted,

We heard your father and earl Osmond near,

As summon'd to Constantia's court they went.

Sig.

Sig. Ha! imposition?—Well, if I am doom'd
To be, o'er all my fex, the wretch of love,
In vain I would resist — Give me the letter —
To know the worst is some relief—Alas,
It was not thus, with such dire palpitations,
That, Tancred, once I us'd to read thy letters.

[*Attempting to read the letter, but gives it to Laura.*
Ah, fond remembrance blinds me!—Read it, Laura.

Lau. [*Reads.*] “ Deliver me, Sigismunda, from that
most exquisite misery which a faithful heart can suffer—
To be thought base by her, from whose esteem even
virtue borrows new charms. When I submitted to my
cruel situation, it was not falshood you beheld, but an
excess of love. Rather than endanger that, I for a
while gave up my honour. Every moment till I see you
stabs me with severer pangs than real guilt itself can feel.
Let me then conjure you to meet me in the garden,
towards the close of the day, when I will explain this
mystery. We have been most inhumanly abused; and
that by the means of the very paper which I gave you,
from the warmest sincerity of love, to assure to you the
heart and hand of
TANCRED.”

Sig. There, Laura, there, the dreadful secret sprung!
That paper! ah, that paper! it suggests
A thousand horrid thoughts—I to my father
Gave it; and he perhaps---I dare not cast
A look that way—If yet indeed you love me,
Oh, blast me not, kind Tancred, with the truth!
Oh, pitying keep me ignorant for ever.
What strange peculiar misery is mine?
Reduc'd to wish the man I love were false?
' Why was I hurry'd to a step so rash?
' Repairless woe!---I might have waited, sure,
' A few short hours---No duty that forbade---
' I ow'd thy love that justice; till this day
' Thy love an image of all-perfect goodness!
' A beam from heav'n that glow'd with every virtue!
' And have I thrown this prize of life away?
' The piteous wreck of one distracted moment?
' Ah, the cold prudence of remorseless age;
' Ah, parents, traitors to your children's blifs;

' Ah,

‘ Ah, curs’d, ah, blind revenge!---On every hand
 ‘ I was betray’d---You, Laura, too, betray’d me!
 ‘ *Lau.* Who, who, but he, whate’er he writes, be-
 tray’d you?

‘ Or false or pusillanimous. For once,
 ‘ I will with you suppose, that his agreement
 ‘ To the king’s will was forg’d---Tho’ forg’d by whom?
 ‘ Your father scorns the crime---Yet what avails it?
 ‘ This, if it clears his truth, condemns his spirit.
 ‘ A youthful king, by love and honour fir’d,
 ‘ Patient to sit on his insulted throne,
 ‘ And let an outrage, of so high nature,
 ‘ Unpunish’d pass, uncheck’d, uncontradicted---
 ‘ Oh, ’tis a meanness equal ev’n to falsehood.

‘ *Sig.* Laura, no more---We have already judg’d
 ‘ Too largely without knowledge. Oft, what seems
 ‘ A trifle, a meer nothing, by itself,
 ‘ In some nice situations turns the scale
 ‘ Of fate, and rules the most important actions.
 ‘ Yes, I begin to feel a sad presage;
 ‘ I am undone, from that eternal source
 ‘ Of human woes---the judgment of the passions.
 ‘ But what have I to do with these excuses?
 ‘ Oh, cease, my treacherous heart, to give them room!
 ‘ It suits not thee to plead a lover’s cause:
 ‘ Even to lament my fate is now dishonour.
 ‘ Nought now remains, but with relentless purpose,
 ‘ To shun all interviews, all clearing up
 ‘ Of this dark scene; to wrap myself in gloom,
 ‘ In solitude and shades; there to devour
 ‘ The silent sorrows ever swelling here;
 ‘ And since I must be wretched-- for I must---
 ‘ To claim the mighty misery myself,
 ‘ Engross it all, and spare a hapless father.
 ‘ Hence, let me fly!---The hour approaches---

Lau. Madam,

Behold he comes---the king---

Sig. Heavens! how escape?

No---I will stay---This one last meeting---Leave me.

[*Exit* Laura.]

Enter Tancred.

Tan. And are these long, long hours of torture past?
My life! my Sigismunda!

[Throwing himself at her feet.

Sig. Rise, my lord.

To see my sovereign thus no more becomes me.

Tan. Oh, let me kiss the ground on which you tread!
Let me exhale my soul in softest transport!

Since I again behold my Sigismunda! *[Rising.*

Unkind! how couldst thou ever deem me false?

How thus dishonour love?---‘ Oh, I could much

‘ Embitter my complaint!---How low were then

‘ Thy thoughts of me? How didst thou then affront

‘ The human heart itself?’ After the vows,

The fervent truth, the tender protestations,

Which mine has often pour’d, to let thy breast,

Whate’er th’ appearance was, admit suspicion?

Sig. How! when I heard myself your full consent

To the late king’s so just and prudent will?

Heard it before you read, in solemn senate?

When I beheld you give your royal hand,

To her, whose birth and dignity of right

Demands that high alliance? Yes, my lord,

You have done well. The man whom Heaven appoints

To govern others, should himself first learn

To bend his passions to the sway of reason.

In all, you have done well; but when you bid

My humbled hopes look up to you again,

And sooth’d with wanton cruelty my weakness---

That too was well---My vanity deserv’d

The sharp rebuke, ‘ whose fond extravagance

‘ Could ever dream to balance your repose,

‘ Your glory, and the welfare of a people.’

Tan. Chide on, chide on. Thy soft reproaches now

Instead of wounding, only sooth my fondness.

No, no, thou charming consort of my soul!

I never lov’d thee with such faithful ardour,

As in that cruel miserable moment

You thought me false; ‘ when even my honour stoop’d

‘ To wear for thee a baffled face of baseness.’

It was thy barbarous father, Sigismunda,

Who caught me in the toil. He turn’d that paper,

Meant

Meant for th' assuring bond of nuptial love,
 To ruin it for ever; he, he wrote
 That forg'd consent, you heard, beneath my name,
 'Nay, dar'd before my outrag'd throne to read it!
 Had he not been thy father——Ha! my love!
 You tremble, you grow pale!

Sig. Oh, leave me, Tancred!

Tan. No!—Leave thee?—Never! never! till you set
 My heart at peace, till these dear lips again
 Pronounce thee mine! Without thee, I renounce
 Myself, my friends, the world—Here on this hand——

Sig. My lord, forget that hand, which never now
 Can be to thine united——

Tan. Sigismunda!

What dost thou mean?—Thy words, thy look, thy man-
 ner,

Seem to conceal some horrid secret—Heavens!——
 No—That was wild—Distraction fires the thought!——

Sig. Enquire no more——I never can be thine.

Tan. What, who shall interpose? Who dares attempt
 To brave the fury of an injur'd king,
 Who, ere he sees thee ravish'd from his hopes,
 Will wrap all blazing Sicily in flames?——

Sig. In vain your power, my lord——'Tis fatal error,
 Join'd to my father's unrelenting will,
 Has plac'd an everlasting bar betwixt us——
 I am——earl Osmond's——wife.

Tan. Earl Osmond's wife!——

*[After a long pause, during which they look at one another
 with the highest agitation, and most tender distress.]*

Heavens! did I hear thee right? What! marry'd?
 Lost to thy faithful Tancred? lost for ever! [marry'd!
 Couldst thou then doom me to such matchless woe,
 Without so much as hearing me?—Distraction!——
 Alas! what hast thou done? Ah, Sigismunda!

Thy rash credulity has done a deed,
 Which, of two happiest lovers that e'er felt
 The blissful power, has made two finish'd wretches!
 But---Madness!---Sure, thou know'st it cannot be!
 This hand is mine! a thousand thousand vows——

Enter Osmond.

Osmond. *[Snatching her hand from the king.]* Madam,
 this hand, by the most solemn rites,

A little hour ago, was given to me,
 And did not sovereign honour now command me,
 Never but with my life to quit my claim,
 I would renounce it——thus!

Tan. Ha! who art thou?

Prefumptuous man!

Sig. [*Aside.*] Where is my father? Heavens! [*Goes out.*

Osm. One thou shouldst better know---Yes---view me,
 Who can and will maintain his rights and honour, [one
 Against a faithless prince, an upstart king,
 Whose first base deed is what a harden'd tyrant
 Would blush to act.

Tan. Insolent Osmond! know,
 This upstart king will hurl confusion on thee,
 And all who shall invade his sacred rights,
 Prior to thine---Thine, founded on compulsion,
 On infamous deceit, ' while his proceed
 ' From mutual love, and free long-plighted faith.
 ' She is, and shall be mine!'---I will annul,
 By the high power with which the laws invest me,
 Those guilty forms in which you have entrap'd,
 ' Basely entrap'd, to thy detested nuptials,'
 My queen betroth'd, who has my heart, my hand,
 And shall partake my throne---If, haughty lord,
 If this thou didst not know, then know it now;
 And know, besides, as I have told thee this,
 Shouldst thou but think to urge thy treason further——
 ' Than treason more! treason against my love!'---
 Thy life shall answer for it.

Osm. Ha! my life!——

It moves my scorn to hear thy empty threats.
 When was it that a Norman baron's life
 Became so vile, as on the frown of kings
 To hang?---Of that, my lord, the law must judge:
 Or if the law be weak, my guardian sword——

Tan. Dare not to touch it, traitor, lest my rage
 Break loose, and do a deed that misbecomes me.

Enter Siffredi.

Siff. My gracious lord, what is it I behold!
 My sovereign in contention with his subjects?
 Surely this house deserves from royal Tancred
 A little more regard, than to be made

A scene of trouble, and unseemly jars.
 ' It grieves my soul, it baffles every hope,
 ' It makes me sick of life, to see thy glory
 ' Thus blasted in the bud.'---Heavens! can your highness
 From your exalted character descend,
 ' The dignity of virtue; and, instead
 ' Of being the protector of our rights,
 ' The holy guardian of domestic bliss,'
 Unkindly thus disturb the sweet repose,
 The secret peace of families, for which
 Alone the free-born race of man to laws
 And government submitted?

Tan. My lord Siffredi,
 Spare thy rebuke. The duties of my station
 Are not to me unknown. But thou, old man,
 Dost thou not blush to talk of rights invaded;
 And of our best, our dearest bliss disturb'd?
 Thou, who with more than barbarous perfidy
 Hast trampled all allegiance, justice, truth,
 Humanity itself beneath thy feet?
 Thou know'st thou hast---I could, to thy confusion,
 Return thy hard reproaches; but I spare thee
 Before this lord, for whose ill-forted friendship
 Thou hast most basely sacrific'd thy daughter.
 Farewel, my lord.---For thee, lord constable,
 Who dost presume to lift thy furlly eye
 To my soft love, my gentle Sigismunda,
 I once again command thee, on thy life-----
 Yes---chew thy rage---but mark me---on thy life,
 No further urge thy arrogant pretensions! [*Exit Tan.*

Ofm. Ha! Arrogant pretensions! Heaven and earth!
 What! arrogant pretensions to my wife?
 My wedded wife! Where are we? In a land
 Of civil rule, of liberty and laws?---
 Not, on my life, pursue them?---Giddy prince!
 My life disdains thy nod. It is the gift
 Of parent Heaven, who gave me too an arm,
 A spirit to defend it against tyrants.
 ' The Norman race, the sons of mighty Rollo;
 ' Who rushing in a tempest from the north,
 ' Great nurse of generous freemen, bravely won
 ' With their own swords their seats, and still possess them

' By the same noble tenure, are not us'd
 ' To hear such language——If I now desist,
 ' Then brand me for a coward! deem me villain!
 ' A traitor to the public! By this conduct
 ' Deceiv'd, betray'd, insulted, tyranniz'd.
 Mine is a common cause. My arm shall guard,
 Mix'd with my own, the rights of each Sicilian,
 ' Of social life, and of mankind in general.
 Ere to thy tyrant rage they fall a prey,
 I shall find means to shake thy tottering throne,
 ' Which this illegal, this perfidious usage
 ' Forfeits at once,' and crush thee in the ruins!——
 Constantia is my queen!

Siff. Lord constable,
 Let us be stedfast in the right; but let us
 Act with cool prudence, and with manly temper,
 As well as manly firmness. ' True, I own,
 ' Th' indignities you suffer are so high,
 ' As might even justify what now you threaten.
 ' But if, my lord, we can prevent the woes,
 ' The cruel horrors of intestine war,
 ' Yet hold untouch'd our liberties and laws;
 ' Oh, let us, rais'd above the turbid sphere
 ' Of little selfish passions, nobly do it!
 ' Nor to our hot, intemperate pride, pour out
 ' A dire libation of Sicilian blood.
 ' 'Tis godlike magnanimity to keep,
 ' When most provok'd, our reason calm and clear,
 ' And execute her will, from a strong sense
 ' Of what is right, without the vulgar aid
 ' Of heat and passion, which, tho' honest, bear us
 ' Often too far.' Remember that my house
 Protects my daughter still; and ere I saw her
 Thus ravish'd from us, by the arm of power,
 This hand should act the Roman father's part.
 Fear not; be temperate; all will yet be well.
 I know the king. ' At first his passions burst
 ' Quick as the lightning's flash; but in his breast
 ' Honour and justice dwell'——Trust me, to reason
 He will return.

Ofm. He will!—By Heavens, he shall!——
 You know the king—I wish, my lord, Siffredi,

That you had deign'd to tell me all you knew——
 And would you have me wait, with duteous patience,
 Till he return to reason? Ye just Powers!
 When he has planted on our necks his foot,
 And trod us into slaves; when his vain pride
 Is cloy'd with our submission; 'if, at last,
 'He finds his arm too weak to shake the frame
 'Of wide-establish'd order out of joint,
 'And overturn all justice; then, perchance,
 'He, in a fit of sickly kind repentance,
 'May make a merit to return to reason.'

No, no, my lord! there is a nobler way,
 To teach the blind oppressive Fury reason:
 Oft has the lustre of avenging steel
 Unseal'd her stupid eyes—The sword is reason!

Enter Rodolpho with Guards.

Rod. My lord high constable of Sicily,
 In the king's name, and by his special order,
 I here arrest you prisoner of state.

Ojm. What king? I know no king of Sicily,
 Unless he be the husband of Constantia.

Rod. Then know him now——Behold his royal orders
 To bear you to the castle of Palermo.

Siff. Let the big torrent foam its madness off.
 Submit, my lord—No castle long can hold
 Our wrongs—This, more than friendship or alliance,
 Confirms me thine; this binds me to thy fortunes,
 By the strong tie of common injury,
 Which nothing can dissolve——I grieve, Rodolpho,
 'To see the reign in such unhappy sort
 Begin.

Ojm. The reign! the usurpation call it!
 This meteor king may blaze a while, but soon
 Must spend his idle terrors—Sir, lead on——
 Farewel, my lord——More than my life and fortune,
 Remember well, is in your hands——my honour!

Siff. Our honour is the same. My son, farewell——
 We shall not long be parted. On these eyes
 Sleep shall not shed his balm, till I behold thee
 Restor'd to freedom, or partake thy bonds.

Even noble courage is not void of blame,
 Till nobler patience sanctifies its flame.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT

A C T V.

SCENE, *a chamber.*Siffredi, *alone.*

THE prospect lows around. I found the king,
 Tho' calm'd a little, with subsiding tempest,
 As suits his generous nature, yet in love
 Abated nought, most ardent in his purpose;
 Inexorably fix'd, whate'er the risque,
 To claim my daughter, and dissolve this marriage —
 I have embark'd, upon a perilous sea,
 A mighty treasure. ' Here the rapid youth,
 ' Th' impetuous passions of a lover-king,
 ' Check my bold purpose; and there, the jealous pride,
 ' Th' impatient honour of a haughty lord,
 ' Of the first rank, in interest and dependants
 ' Near equal to the king, forbid retreat.
 ' My honour too, the same unchang'd conviction,
 ' That these my measures were, and still remain,
 ' Of absolute necessity to save
 ' The land from civil fury, urge me on.
 ' But how proceed? — I only faster rush
 ' Upon the desperate evils I would shun.
 ' Whate'er the motive be, deceit, I fear,
 ' And harsh unnatural force, are not the means
 ' Of public welfare, or of private bliss' —
 Bear witness, Heaven! Thou mind-inspecting eye!
 My breast is pure. I have prefer'd my duty,
 The good and safety of my fellow-subjects,
 To all those views that fire the selfish race
 Of mortal men, and mix them in eternal broils.

Enter an Officer belonging to Siffredi.

Off. My lord, a man of noble port, his face
 Wrap'd in disguise, is earnest for admission.

Siff. Go, bid him enter — *[Officer goes out.]*
 Ha! wrap'd in disguise!

And at this late unseasonable hour!

' When o'er the world tremendous midnight reigns,
 ' By the dire gloom of raging tempest doubled —

Who can it be?

Enter

Enter Osmond discovering himself.

Siff. 'What! ha!' earl Osmond, you?—Welcome,
once more,

To this glad roof!—But why in this disguise?
Would I could hope the king exceeds his promise!
I have his faith, soon as to-morrow's sun
Shall gild Sicilia's cliffs, you shall be free.—
Has some good angel turn'd his heart to justice?

Ofm. It is not by the favour of count Tancred
That I am here. As much I scorn his favour,
As I defy his tyranny and threats——
Our friend Goffredo, who commands the castle,
On my parole, ere dawn, to render back
My person, has permitted me this freedom.
Know then; the faithless outrage of to-day,
By him committed whom you call the king,
Has rous'd Constantia's court. Our friends, the friends
Of virtue, justice, and of public faith,
Ripe for revolt, are in high ferment all.

' This, this, they say, exceeds whate'er deform'd
' The miserable days we saw beneath
' William the Bad. This saps the solid base,
' At once, of government and private life;
' This shameless imposition on the faith,
' The majesty of senates, this lewd insult,
' This violation of the rights of men,
' Added to these, his ignominious treatment
' Of her, th' illustrious offspring of our kings,
' Sicilia's hope, and now our royal mistress.
' You know, my lord, how grossly these infringe
' The late king's will, which orders, if count Tancred
' Make not Constantia partner of his throne,
' That he be quite excluded the succession,
' And she to Henry given, king of the Romans,
' The potent emperor Barbarossa's son,
' Who seeks with earnest instance her alliance.'

I thence of you, as guardian of the laws,
As guardian of this will, to you entrusted,
Desire, nay more, demand your instant aid,
To see it put in vigorous execution.

Siff. You cannot doubt, my lord, of my concurrence.
Who, more than I, have labour'd this great point?

'Tis

'Tis my own plan; and if I drop it now,
 I should be justly branded with the shame
 Of rash advice, or despicable weakness.
 But let us not precipitate the matter.
 Constantia's friends are numerous and strong;
 Yet Tancred's, trust me, are of equal force.
 E'er since the secret of his birth was known,
 The people all are in a tumult hurl'd,
 Of boundless joy, ' to hear there lives a prince
 ' Of mighty Guiscard's line. Numbers, besides,
 ' Of powerful barons, who at heart had pin'd,
 ' To see the reign of their renown'd forefathers,
 ' Won by immortal deeds of matchless valour,
 ' Pass from the gallant Normans to the Suevi,
 ' Will with a kind of rage espouse his cause ——
 ' 'Tis so, my lord —— be not by passion blinded ——
 ' 'Tis surely so' —— Oh, if our prating virtue
 Dwells not in words alone —— Oh, let us join,
 My generous Osmond; to avert these woes,
 And yet sustain our tottering Norman kingdom !

Os. But how, Siffredi, how ? —— If by soft means
 We can maintain our rights, and save our country,
 May his unnatural blood first stain the sword,
 Who with unpyting fury first shall draw it !

Siff. I have a thought —— The glorious work be thine.
 ' But it requires an awful flight of virtue,
 ' Above the passions of the vulgar breast,
 ' And thence from thee I hope it, noble Osmond ——
 Suppose my daughter, to her God devoted,
 Were plac'd within some convent's sacred verge,
 Beneath the dread protection of the altar ——

Os. Ere then, by Heavens ! I would ' devoutly shave
 ' My holy scalp,' turn whining monk myself,
 And pray incessant for the tyrant's safety. ——
 What ! How ! because an insolent invader,
 A sacrilegious tyrant, ' in contempt
 ' Of all those noblest rights, which to maintain
 ' Is man's peculiar pride,' demands my wife ;
 ' That I shall thus betray the common cause
 ' Of human kind.'

*What ! shall I tamely yield her up,
 Even in the manner you propose ? —— Oh, then*

I were supremely vile! degraded! sham'd!
The scorn of manhood! and abhorr'd of honour!

Siff. There is, my lord, an honour, the calm child
Of reason, of humanity and mercy,
Superior far to this punctilious demon,
That singly minds itself, and oft embroils
With proud barbarian niceties the world.

Osmond. My lord, my lord, I cannot brook your prudence;
It holds a pulse unequal to my blood —
Unblemish'd honour is the flower of virtue!
The vivifying soul! and he who slight it,
Will leave the other dull and lifeless dross.

Siff. No more——You are too warm.

Osmond. You are too cool.

Siff. Too cool, my lord? I were indeed too cool,
Not to resent this language, and to tell thee——
I wish earl Osmond were as cool as I
To his own selfish bliss——ay, and as warm
To that of others——But of this no more——
My daughter is thy wife——I gave her to thee,
And will, against all force, maintain her thine.
But think not I will catch thy headlong passions,
Whirl'd in a blaze of madness o'er the land;
Or, till the last extremity compel me,
Risk the dire means of war——The king, to-morrow,
Will set you free; and, if by gentle means
He does not yield my daughter to your arms,
And wed Constantia, as the will requires,
Why then expect me on the side of justice——
Let that suffice.

Osmond. It does——Forgive my heat.
My rankled mind, by injuries inflam'd,
May be too prompt to take, and give offence. [port

Siff. 'Tis past——Your wrongs, I own, may well trans-
The wisest mind——But henceforth, noble Osmond,
Do me more justice, honour more my truth,
Nor mark me with an eye of squint suspicion——
' These jars apart——You may repose your soul
' On my firm faith, and unremitting friendship.
' Of that I sure have given exalted proof,
' And the next sun we see shall prove it further.'——
Return, my son, and from your friend Goffredo

Release your word. There try, by soft repose,
To calm your breast.

Os. Bid the vext ocean sleep,
Swept by the pinions of the raging north—
But your frail age, by care and toil exhausted,
Demands the balm of all-repairing rest.

Siff. Soon as to-morrow's dawn shall itreak the skies,
I, with my friends in solemn state assembled,
Will to the palace, and demand your freedom,
Then by calm reason, or by higher means,
The king shall quit his claim, and in the face
Of Sicily, my daughter shall be yours.
Farewel.

Os. My lord, good night. [*Exit Siffredi.*]

Os. [*After a long pause.*] I like him not—
Yes—I have mighty matter of suspicion.
'Tis plain. I see it lurking in his breast,
'He has a foolish fondness for this king'—
My honour is not safe, while here my wife
Remain—Who knows but he this very night
May bear her to some convent, as he mention'd—
The king too—tho' I smother'd up my rage,
I mark'd it well—will set me free to-morrow.
Why not to-night? He has some dark design—
By Heavens, he has!—I am abus'd most grossly;
Made the vile tool of this old statesman's schemes;
'Marry'd to one—ay, and he knew it---one
'Who loves young Tancred! Hence her swooning, tears,
'And all her soft distress, when she disgrac'd me,
'By basely giving her perfidious hand
'Without her heart---Hell and perdition! this,
'This is the perfidy!---This is the fell,
'The keen, envenom'd, exquisite disgrace,
'Which, to a man of honour, even exceeds
'The falshood of the person---But I now
'Will rouse me from the poor tame lethargy,
'By my believing fondness cast upon me.'
I will not wait his crawling timid motions,
'Perhaps to blind me meant, which he to-morrow
'Has promis'd to pursue. No! ere his eyes
'Shall open on to-morrow's orient beam,'
I will convince him that earl Osmond never

Was form'd to be his dupe---' I know full well
 ' Th' important weight and danger of the deed :
 ' But to a man, whom greater dangers prefs,
 ' Driven to the brink of infamy and horror,
 ' Rashness itself, and utter desperation,
 ' Are the best prudence.'---I will bear her off
 This night, and lodge her in a place of safety
 I have a trusty band that waits not far.
 Hence! let me lose no time---One rapid moment
 Should ardent form, at once, and execute
 A bold design---'Tis fix'd---' 'Tis done!---Yes, then,
 ' When I have seiz'd the prize of love and honour,
 ' And with a friend secur'd her; to the castle
 ' I will repair, and claim Goffredo's promise
 ' To rise with all his garrison---My friends
 ' With brave impatience wait.' The mine is laid,
 And only wants my kindling touch to spring. [*Ex. Osin.*]

S C E N E, Sigismunda's apartment.

[*Thunder.*]*Enter Sigismunda and Laura.**Lau.* Heavens! 'tis a fearful night!*Sig.* Ah! the black rage

Of midnight tempest, or th' assuring smiles

Of radiant morn, are equal all to me.

Nought now has charms or terrors to my breast,

The feat of stupid woe!---Leave me, my Laura.

Kind rest, perhaps, may hush my woes a little---

Oh, for that quiet sleep that knows no morning!

Lau. Madam, indeed I know not how to go.

Indulge my fondness---Let me watch a while

By your sad bed, till these dread hours shall pass.

Sig. Alas! what is the toil of elements,[*Thunder.*]

This idle perturbation of the sky,

To what I feel within?---Oh, that the fires

Of pitying Heaven would point their fury here!

Good night, my dearest Laura.

Lau. Oh, I know not

What this oppression means---But 'tis with pain,

With tears, I can persuade myself to leave you ———

Well then---Good night, my dearest Sigismunda. [*Exit.*]*Sig.* And am I then alone?---The most undone,

Most wretched being now beneath the cope
 Of this affrighting gloom that wraps the world——
 I said I did not fear—Ah, me! I feel
 A shivering horror run thro' all my powers!
 Oh, I am nought but tumult, fears and weakness!
 And yet how idle fear when hope is gone,
 Gone, gone for ever!—Oh, thou gentle scene

[*Looking towards her bed.*]

Of sweet repose, where by th' oblivious draught
 Of each sad toilsome day, to peace restor'd,
 Unhappy mortals lose their woes awhile,
 Thou hast no peace for me!—What shall I do?
 How pass this dreadful night, so big with terror?——
 Here, with the midnight shades, here will I sit,

[*Sitting down.*]

A prey to dire despair, and ceaseless weep
 The hours away—Bless me—I heard a noise——

[*Starting up.*]

No—I mistook—Nothing but silence reigns
 And awful midnight round—Again!—Oh, Heavens!
 My lord the king!

Enter Tancred.

Tan. Be not alarm'd, my love!

Sig. My royal lord, why at this midnight hour,
 How came you hither?

Tan. By that secret way
 My love contriv'd, when we, in happier days,
 Us'd to devote these hours, so much in vain,
 To vows of love and everlasting friendship.

Sig. Why will you thus persist to add new stings
 To her distress, who never can be thine?

Oh, fly me! fly! you know——

Tan. I know too much.

Oh, how I could reproach thee, Sigismunda!
 Pour out my injur'd soul in just complaints!
 But now the time permits not, these swift moments—
 I told thee how thy father's artifice
 Forc'd me to seem perfidious in thy eyes.

' Ah, fatal blindness! not to have observ'd
 ' The mingled pangs of rage and love that shook me:
 ' When by my cruel public situation
 ' Compell'd, I only feign'd consent, to gain
 ' A little time, and more secure thee mine.'

E'er since---a dreadful interval of care,
 My thoughts have been employ'd, not without hope,
 How to defeat Siffredi's barbarous purpose.
 But thy credulity has ruin'd all,
 Thy rash, thy wild---I know not what to name it---
 Oh, it has prov'd the giddy hopes of man
 To be delusion all, and sickening folly!

Sig. Ah, generous Tancred! ah, thy truth destroys me!
 Yes, yes, 'tis I, 'tis I alone am false!
 My hasty rage, join'd to my tame submission,
 More than the most exalted filial duty
 Could e'er demand, has dash'd our cup of fate
 With bitterness unequal'd---But, alas!
 What are thy woes to mine?---to mine! just Heaven!
 Now is thy turn of vengeance---hate, renounce me!
 Oh, leave me to the fate I well deserve,
 To sink in hopeless misery!---at least,
 Try to forget the worthless Sigismunda!

Tan. Forget thee! No! Thou art my soul itself!
 I have no thought, no hope, no wish but thee!
 ' Even this repented injury, the fears,
 ' That rouse me all to madness, at the thought
 ' Of losing thee, the whole collected pains
 ' Of my full heart, serve but to make thee dearer.'
 Ah, how, forget thee!---Much must be forgot,
 Ere Tancred can forget his Sigismunda!

Sig. But you, my lord, must make that great effort.

Tan. Can Sigismunda make it?

Sig. Ah, I know not

With what success---But all that feeble woman
 And love-entangled reason can perform,
 I, to the utmost, will exert to do it.

Tan. Fear not---'Tis done!---If thou canst form the
 thought,

' Success is sure---I am forgot already.

Sig. Ah, Tancred!---But, my lord, respect me more.

' Think who I am---What can you now propose?

Tan. To claim the plighted vows which heaven has
 heard,

' To vindicate the rights of holy love

' By faith and honour bound, to which compar'd

' These empty forms, which have ensnar'd thy hand,

' Are impious guile, abuse, and profanation ——
 ' Nay, as a king, whose high prerogative
 ' By this unlicens'd marriage is affronted,
 ' To bid the laws themselves pronounce it void.
 ' *Sig.* Honour, my lord, is much too proud to catch
 ' At every slender twig of nice distinctions.
 ' These for th' unfeeling vulgar may do well :
 ' But those, whose souls are by the nicer rule
 ' Of virtuous delicacy nobly sway'd,
 ' Stand at another bar than that of laws.
 ' Then cease to urge me---Since I am not born
 ' To that exalted fate to be your queen——
 ' Or, yet a dearer name——to be your wife! ——
 ' I am the wife of an illustrious lord
 ' Of your own princely blood; and what I am,
 ' I will with proper dignity remain.
 ' Retire, my royal lord---There is no means
 ' To cure the wounds this fatal day has given.
 ' We meet no more !'

Tan. Oh, barbarous Sigismunda !
 And canst thou talk thus steadily ? thus treat me
 With such un pitying, unrelenting rigour ?
 Poor is the love, that rather than give up
 A little pride, a little formal pride,
 The breath of vanity, can bear to see
 The man, whose heart was once so dear to thine,
 By many a tender vow so mix'd together,
 A prey to anguish, fury and distraction !
 Thou canst not surely make me such a wretch,
 Thou canst not, Sigismunda !.-.-Yet relent,
 Oh, save us yet !---Rodolpho, with my guards,
 Waits in the garden---Let us seize the moments
 We ne'er may have again—With more than power
 I will assert thee mine, with fairest honour.
 The world shall even approve ; each honest bosom
 Swell'd with a kindred joy to see us happy.

Sig. The world approve ! What is the world to me ?
 The conscious mind is its own awful world.——
*And mine is fix'd---Distress me then no more ;
 Not all the heart can plead, (and it, alas,
 Pleads but too much)*

' And yet, perhaps, if thou wert not a king,

' I know

' I know not, Tancred, what I might have done,
 ' Then, then, my conduct, sanctify'd by love,
 ' Could not be deem'd, by the severest judge,
 ' The mean effect of interest or ambition.
 ' But now not all my partial heart can plead,
 Shall ever shake th' unalterable dictates
 That tyrannize my breast.

Tan. 'Tis well --No more---

I yield me to my fate---Yes, yes inhuman!
 Since thy barbarian heart is steel'd by pride,
 Shut up to love and pity, here behold me
 Cast on the ground, a vile and abject wretch!
 Lost to all cares, all dignities, all duties!
 Here will I grow, breathe out my faithful soul,
 Here at thy feet---Death, death alone shall part us!

Sig. Have you then vow'd to drive me to perdition?
 What can I more?---Yes, Tancred! once again
 I will forget the dignity my station
 Commands me to sustain---for the last time
 Will tell thee, that, I fear, no ties, no duty,
 Can ever root thee from my hapless bosom.
 Oh, leave me! fly me! were it but in pity!---
 To see what once we tenderly have lov'd,
 Cut off from every hope---cut off for ever!
 Is pain thy generosity should spare me.

Then rise, my lord; and if you truly love me;
 If you respect my honour, nay, my peace,
 Retire! for though th' emotions of my heart
 Can ne'er alarm my virtue; yet, alas!
 They tear it so, they pierce it with such anguish---
 Oh, 'tis too much!---I cannot bear the conflict!

Enter Osmond.

Os. Turn, tyrant, turn! and answer to my honour,
 For this thy base insufferable outrage!

Tan. Insolent traitor! think not to escape
 Thyself my vengeance! [*They fight. Osmond falls.*]

Sig. Help, here! Help!---Oh, heavens!

[*Throwing herself down by him.*]

Alas, my lord, what meant your headlong rage?
 That faith, which I this day, upon the altar,
 To you devoted, is unblemish'd, pure

As vestal truth ; was resolutely yours,
Beyond the power of aught on earth to shake it.

Of. Perfidious woman ! die !—— [*Shortening his sword, he plunges it into her breast.*] and to the grave
Attend a husband, yet but half aveng'd !

Tan. Oh, horror ! horror ! execrable villain !

Of. And, tyrant ! thou !---Thou shalt not o'er my tomb
Exult---'Tis well---'Tis great !---I die content !---[*Dies.*

Enter Rodolpho, and Laura.

Tan. [*Throwing himself down by Sigismunda.*] Quick !
here ! bring aid !---' All in Palermo bring
' Whose skill can save her !'---Ah, that gentle bosom
Pours fast the streams of life.

Sig. All aid is vain,
I feel the powerful hand of death upon me---
But, Oh ! it sheds a sweetness through my fate,
That I am thine again ; and without blame
May in my Tancred's arms resign my soul !

Tan. Oh, death is in that voice ! so gently mild,
So sadly sweet, as mixes even with mine
The tears of hovering angels !---Mine again !——
And is it thus the cruel fates have join'd us ?
Are these the horrid nuptials they prepare
For love like ours ?---' Is virtue thus rewarded ?
' Let not my impious rage accuse just heav'n !
' Thou, Tancred, thou, hast murdered Sigismunda !
' That furious man was but the tool of fate,
' I, I, the cause !---But I will do thee justice
' On this deaf heart ! that to thy tender wisdom
' Refus'd an ear'---Yes, death shall soon unite us.

Sig. Live, live, my Tancred !---Let my death suffice
To expiate all that may have been amiss.
May it appease the fates, avert their fury
From thy propitious reign ! ' Mean time, of me
' And of thy glory mindful, live, I charge thee,
' To guard our friends, and make thy people happy---'

Enter Siffredi fix'd in astonishment and grief.
My father !——Oh, how shall I lift my eyes
To thee, my sinking father !

Sif. Awful heaven !
I am chastis'd——My dearest child !——

Sig. Where am I?

A fearful darkness closes all around—

My friends! We needs must part---I must obey
Th' impetuous call—Farewel, my Laura! 'cherish
' My poor afflicted father's age---Rodolpho,
' Now is the time to watch th' unhappy king,
' With all the care and tenderness of friendship.'—

Oh, my dear father, bow'd beneath the weight
Of age and grief---the victim even of virtue,
Receive my last adieu!---Where art thou, Tancred?
Give me thy hand---But, ah,---it cannot save me
From the dire king of terrors, whose cold power
Creeps o'er my heart—Oh!

Tan. How these pangs distract me!

Oh, lift thy gracious eyes;—Thou leav'st me then!
Thou leav'it me, Sigismunda!

Sig. ' Yet a moment—

' I had, my Tancred, something more to say—
' Yes—but thy love and tenderness for me,
' Sure makes it needless---Harbour no resentment
' Against my father; venerate his zeal,
' That acted from a principle of goodness,
' From faithful love to thee---Live, and maintain
' My innocence imbalm'd, with holiest care
' Preserve my spotless memory!' Oh—-I die—
Eternal Mercy take my trembling soul!
Oh, 'tis the only sting of death to part
From those we love---from thee---farewel, my Tancred!

[Dies.]

Tan. Thus then!

[Flying to his sword, is held by Rodolpho.]

Rod. Hold, hold, my lord!---Have you forgot
Your Sigismunda's last request already?

Tan. Off! set me free! Think not to bind me down,
With barbarous friendship, to the rack of life!
What hand can shut the thousand thousand gates,
Which death still opens to the woes of mortals?---
' I shall find means---No power in earth or heaven
' Can force me to endure the hateful light,
' Thus robb'd of all that lent it joy and sweetness!
Off, traitors, off! or my distracted soul

Will

Will burst indignant from this jail of nature,
 To where she beckons yonder---No, mild seraph;
 Point not to life---I cannot linger here,
 Cut off from thee, the miserable pity,
 The scorn of human kind!---A trampled king!
 ' Who let his mean poor-hearted love, one moment,
 ' To coward prudence stoop; who made it not
 ' The first undoubting action of his reign,
 ' To snatch thee to his throne, and there to shield thee,
 ' Thy helpless bosom, from a ruffian's fury!'---
 Oh, shame! Oh, agony! Oh, the fell stings
 Of late, of vain repentance!---Ha, my brain
 Is all on fire! a wild abyss of thought!
 Th' infernal world discloses! See! behold him!
 Lo! with fierce smiles he shakes the bloody steel,
 And mocks my feeble tears.---Hence, quickly, hence!
 Spurn his vile carcass! give it to the dogs!
 Expose it to the winds and screaming ravens!
 ' Or hurl it down that fiery steep to hell,
 ' There with his soul to toss in flames for ever.'

Ah, impotence of rage!

Rod. *Preserve him, heaven!*

Tan. What am I? Where?

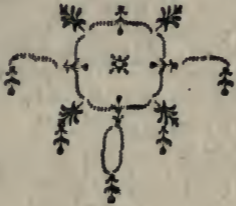
Sad, silent, all?---The forms of dumb despair,
 Around some mournful tomb.---What do I see?
 This soft abode of innocenc and love
 Turn'd to the house of death! a place of horror!---
 Ah, that poor corse! pale! pale! deform'd with murder!
 Is that my Sigismunda? [*Throws himself down by her.*]

Sif. [*After a pathetic pause, looking on the scene before
 him.*] Have I liv'd

To these enfeebled years, by heaven reserv'd;
 To be a dreadful monument of justice?---
 Rodolpho, raise the king, and bear him hence
 From this distracting scene of blood and death.
 ' Alas, I dare not give him my assistance;
 ' My care would only more enflame his rage.
 ' Behold the fatal work of my dark hand,
 ' That by rude force the passions would command,
 ' That ruthless fought to root them from the breast;
 ' They may be rul'd, but will not be oppress.'

Taught hence, ye parents, who from nature stray,
And the great ties of social life betray ;
Ne'er with your children act a tyrant's part :
'Tis yours to guide, not violate the heart.
Ye vainly wise, who o'er mankind preside,
Behold my righteous woes, and drop your pride ;
Keep virtue's simple path before your eyes,
Nor think from evil good can ever rise.

END of the FIFTH ACT.



EPILOGUE.

CRAMM'D to the throat with wholesome moral stuff,
Alas, poor audience! you have had enough.
Was ever hapless heroine of a play
In such a pitcous plight as ours to-day?
Was ever woman so by love betray'd?
Match'd with two husbands, and yet—die a maid.
But bless me!—hold—what sounds are these I bear!—
I see the Tragic Muse herself appear.

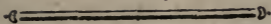
The back-scene opens, and discovers a romantic Sylvan landscape; from which the Tragic Muse advances slowly to music, and speaks the following lines:

Hence with your slippant epilogue, that tries
To wipe the virtuous tear from British eyes;
That dares my moral, tragic scene profane,
With strains—at best, unsuited, light and vain.
Hence from the pure unsully'd beams that play
In yon fair eyes where virtue shines---Away!

Britons, to you from chaste Castalian groves,
Where dwell the tender, oft unhappy loves;
Where shades of heroes roam, each mighty name,
And court my aid to rise again to fame;
To you I come, to freedom's noblest seat,
And in Britannia fix my last retreat.

In Greece and Rome, I watch'd the public weal;
The purple tyrant trembled at my steel:
Nor did I less o'er private sorrows reign,
And mend the melting heart with softer pain.
On France and You then rose my brightning star,
With social ray---The arts are ne'er at war.
Oh, as your fire and genius stronger blaze,
As yours are generous freedom's bolder lays,
Let not the Gallic taste leave yours behind;
In decent manners and in life refin'd;
Banish the motly mode, to tag low verse,
The laughing ballad to the mournful herse.
When thro' five acts your hearts have learn'd to glow,
Touch'd with the sacred force of honest woe;
Oh, keep the dear impression on your breast,
Nor idly lose it for a wretched jest.

BELL'S EDITION.



I S A B E L L A ;

OR, THE
FATAL MARRIAGE.

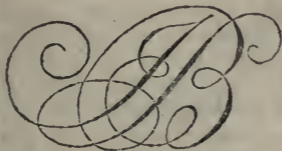
A TRAGEDY,
Altered from SOUTHERN.

DISTINGUISHING ALSO THE
VARIATIONS OF THE THEATRE,
AS PERFORMED AT THE
Theatre-Royal in Dury-Lane.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book,
By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,
By Mr. HOPKINS, Prompter.

Pellex ego facta mariti—

OVID.



L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand,
and C. ETHERINGTON, at York.

MDCCLXXVI.

THE JOURNAL OF

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THOUGH the mixed drama of the last age, called tragi-comedy, has been generally condemned by the critics, and not without reason; yet it has been found to succeed on the stage: both the comic and tragic scenes have been applauded by the audience, without any particular exceptions: nor has it been observed, that the effect of either was less forcible, than it would have been, if they had not succeeded each other in the entertainment of the same night. The tragic part of this play has been always esteemed extremely natural and interesting; and it would probably, like some others, have produced its full effect, notwithstanding the intervention of the comic scenes that are mixed with it: the editor, therefore, would not have thought of removing them, if they had not been exceptionable in themselves, not only as indelicate, but as immoral; for this reason, he has suffered so much of the characters of the Porter and the Nurse to remain, as is not liable to this objection. He is, however, to account, not only for what he has taken away, but for what he has added. It will easily be comprehended, that the leaving out something, made it absolutely necessary that something should be supplied; and the public will be the more easily reconciled to this necessity, when they are acquainted that the additions are very inconsiderable, and that the editor has done his utmost to render them of a piece with the rest. Several lines of the original, particularly in the part of Isabella, are printed, though they are omitted in the representation. Many things please in the reading, which may have little or no effect upon the stage. When the passions are violent, and the speeches long, the performers must either spare their powers, or shorten their speeches. Mrs. Cibber * chose the latter; by which she has been able to exert that force and expression which has been so strongly felt, and so sincerely applauded.

* On the revival of this play at Drury-Lane theatre, Mrs. Cibber performed the character of Isabella.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

	<i>Drury-Lane.</i>
Count <i>Baldwin</i> , father to <i>Biron</i> and <i>Carlos</i>	Mr. Jefferson.
<i>Biron</i> , married to <i>Isabella</i> , supposed dead,	Mr. Smith.
<i>Carlos</i> , his younger brother,	Mr. Aickin.
<i>Villeroy</i> , in love with <i>Isabella</i> , marries her,	Mr. Palmer.
<i>Sampson</i> , porter to count <i>Baldwin</i> ,	Mr. Bransby.
A Child of <i>Isabella's</i> , by <i>Biron</i> ,	Master Pullen.
<i>Belford</i> , a friend of <i>Biron's</i> ,	Mr. Usher.
<i>Pedro</i> , a friend to <i>Carlos</i> ,	Mr. Wrighten.

W O M E N.

<i>Isabella</i> , married to <i>Biron</i> and <i>Villeroy</i> ,	Mrs. Yates.
Nurse to <i>Biron</i> ,	Mrs. Johnston.

Officers, Servants, Men and Women.

SCENE, BRUSSELS.

I S A B E L L A.

* * * *The lines distinguished by inverted comas are omitted in the Representation, and those printed in Italics are the additions of the Theatre.*

A C T I.

SCENE, before Count Baldwin's House.

Enter Villeroy and Carlos.

CARLOS.

THIS constancy of yours will establish an immortal reputation among the women.

Vil. If it would establish me with Isabella——

Car. Follow her, follow her: Troy town was won at last.

Vil. I have follow'd her these seven years, and now but live in hopes.

Car. But live in hopes! Why, hope is the ready road, the lover's baiting-place; and for ought you know, but one stage short of the possession of your mistress.

Vil. But my hopes, I fear, are more of my own making, than hers; and proceed rather from my wishes, than any encouragement she has given me.

Car. That I can't tell: the sex is very various: there are no certain measures to be prescrib'd or follow'd, in making our approaches to the women. All that we have to do, I think, is to attempt 'em in the weakest part. Press them but hard, and they will all fall under the necessity of a surrender at last. That favour comes at once; and sometimes when we least expect it.

Vil. I shall be glad to find it so.

Car. You will find it so. Every place is to be taken, that is not to be reliev'd: she must comply.

Vil. I'm going to visit her.

Car. What interest a brother-in-law can have with her, depend upon.

Vil. I know your interest, and I thank you.

Car. You are prevented; see, the mourner comes; She weeps, as seven years were seven hours; So fresh, unfading, is the memory Of my poor brother's, Biron's, death: I leave you to your opportunity. [*Exit Vil.*

Tho' I have taken care to root her from our house.

I would transplant her into Villeroy's——

There is an evil fate that waits upon her,
To which, I wish him wedded—Only him:

His upstart family, with haughty brow,
(Tho' Villeroy and myself are seeming friends)

Looks down upon our house; his sister too,
Whose hand I ask'd, and was with scorn refus'd,

Lives in my breast, and fires me to revenge.——

They bend this way——

Perhaps, at last, she seeks my father's doors;

They shall be shut, and he prepar'd to give

The beggar and her brat a cold reception.

That boy's an adder in my path—they come,

I'll stand a-part, and watch their motions. [*Retires.*

Enter Villeroy, with Isabella and her little Son.

Isa. Why do you follow me, you know I am

A bankrupt every way; too far engag'd

Ever to make return; I own you've been

More than a brother to me, my friend;

And at a time when friends are found no more,

A friend to my misfortunes.

Vil. I must be

Always your friend.

Isa. I have known, and found you

Truly my friend; and would I could be yours;

But the unfortunate cannot be friends:

'Fate watches the first motion of the soul,

'To disappoint our wishes; if we pray

'For blessings, they prove curses in the end,

'To ruin all about us.' Pray begone,

Take warning, and be happy.

Vil. Happiness!

There's none for me without you : ' Riches, name,
 ' Health, fame, distinction, place, and quality,
 ' Are the incumbrances of groaning life,
 ' To make it but more tedious without you.'

What serve the goods of fortune for ? To raise
 My hopes, that you at last will share them with me.

' Long life itself, the universal prayer,
 ' And heav'n's reward of well-deservers here,
 ' Would prove a plague to me ; to see you always,
 ' And never see you mine ! still to desire,
 ' And never to enjoy !'

Isa. I must not hear you.

Vil. Thus, at this awful distance, I have serv'd
 A seven years bondage——Do I call it bondage,
 When I can never wish to be redeem'd ?

No, let me rather linger out a life
 Of expectation, that you may be mine,
 Than be restor'd to the indifference
 Of seeing you, without this pleasing pain :
 I've lost myself, and never would be found,
 But in these arms.

Isa. Oh, I have heard all this !

——But must no more——the charmer is no more :
 My bury'd husband rises in the face
 Of my dear boy, and chides me for my stay :
 Canst thou forgive me, child ?

Child. Why, have you done a fault ? You cry as if
 you had. Indeed now, I've done nothing to offend
 you : but if you kiss me, and look so very sad upon me,
 I shall cry too.

Isa. My little angel, no, you must not cry ;
 Sorrow will overtake thy steps too soon :
 I should not hasten it.

Vil. What can I say !

The arguments that make against my hopes
 Prevail upon my heart, and fix me more ;
 ' Those pious tears you hourly throw away
 ' Upon the grave, have all their quick'ning charms,
 ' And more engage my love, to make you mine :'
 When yet a virgin, free, and undispos'd,
 I lov'd, but saw you only with my eyes ;
 I could not reach the beauties of your soul :

I have since liv'd in contemplation,
 And long experience of your growing goodness :
 What then was passion, is my judgment now,
 Thro' all the several changes of your life,
 Confirm'd and settled in adoring you.

Isa. Nay, then I must be gone. If you're my friend,
 If you regard my little interest ;

No more of this ; you see, I grant you all
 That friendship will allow : Be still my friend ;
 That's all I can receive, or have to give.

I'm going to my father ; he needs not an excuse
 To use me ill ; pray leave me to the trial.

Vil. I'm only born to be what you would have me,
 The creature of your power, and must obey ;
 In every thing obey you. I am going :
 But all good fortune go along with you.

[*Exit.*

Isa. I shall need all your wishes——
 Lock'd ! and fast !

[*Knocks.*

Where is the charity that us'd to stand
 In our forefathers' hospitable days
 At great men's doors, ready for our wants,
 Like the good angel of the family,
 With open arms taking the needy in,
 To feed and cloath, to comfort and relieve 'em ?
 Now even their gates are shut against their poor.

[*She knocks again.*

Enter Sampson to her.

Samp. Well, what's to do now, I trow ? You knock
 as loud as if you were invited ; and that's more than I
 heard of : but I can tell you, you may look twice about
 you for a welcome, in a great man's family, before you
 find it, unless you bring it along with you.

Isa. I hope I bring my welcome along with me : Is
 your lord at home ?

Samp. My lord at home !

Isa. Count Baldwin lives here still ?

Samp. Ay, ay, Count Baldwin does live here : and I
 am his porter : but what's that to the purpose, good
 woman, of my lord's being at home ?

Isa. Why, don't you know me, friend ?

Samp. Not I, not I, mistress ; I may have seen you
 before, or so : but men of employment must forget their
 acquaintance :

acquaintance ; especially such as we are never to be the better for.

[*Going to shut the door, Nurse enters, having overheard him.*

Nurse. Handsomer words would become you, and mend your manners, Sampson : do you know who you prate to ?

Isa. I'm glad you know me, nurse.

Nurse. Marry, heav'n forbid, Madam, that I should ever forget you, or my little jewel : pray go in—[*Isabella goes in with her child.*] Now my blessing go along with you, wherever you go, or whatever you are about. Fie, Sampson, how couldst thou be such a Saracen ? A Turk would have been a better Christian, than to have done so barbarously by so good a lady.

Samp. Why look you, nurse, I know you of old : by your good-will you would have a finger in every body's pie, but mark the end on't ; if I am call'd to account about it, I know what I have to say.

Nurse. Marry come up here ; say your pleasure, and spare not. Refuse his eldest son's widow, and poor child, the comfort of seeing him ? She does not trouble him so often.

Samp. Not that I am against it, nurse, but we are but servants, you know : we must have no likings, but our lord's ; and must do as we are ordered.

Nurse. Nay, that's true, Sampson.

Samp. Besides, what I did was all for the best : I have no ill-will to the young lady, as a body may say, upon my own account ; only that I hear she is poor ; and indeed I naturally hate your decay'd gentry : they expect as much waiting upon as when they had money in their pockets, and were able to consider us for the trouble.

Nurse. Why, that is a grievance indeed in great families, where the gifts, at good times, are better than the wages. It would do well to be reform'd.

Samp. But what is the business, nurse ? You have been in the family before I came into the world : what's the reason, pray, that this daughter-in-law, who has so good a report in every body's mouth, is so little set by, by my lord ?

Nurse. Why, I tell you, Sampson, more nor less ;

I'll

I'll tell the truth, that's my way, you know, without adding or diminishing.

Samp. Ay, marry, nurse.

Nurse. My lord's eldest son, Biron by name, the son of his bosom, and the son that he would have lov'd best, if he had as many as king Pyramus of Troy.

'*Samp.* How! King Pyramus of Troy! Why how many had he?'

'*Nurse.* Why, the ballet sings he had fifty sons, but 'no matter for that.' This Biron, as I was saying, was a lovely sweet gentleman, and indeed, nobody could blame his father for loving him: he was a son for the king of Spain; God bless him, for I was his nurse. But now I come to the point, Sampson; this Biron, without asking the advice of his friends, hand over head, as young men will have their vagaries, not having the fear of his father before his eyes, as I may say, wilfully marries this Isabella.

Samp. How, wilfully! he should have had her consent, methinks.

Nurse. No, wilfully marries her; and, which was worse, after she had settled all her fortune upon a nunnery, which she broke out of to run away with him. They say they had the church's forgiveness, but I had rather it had been his father's.

Samp. Why in good truth, 'these nunneries, I see 'no good they do. I think the young lady was in the 'right, to run away from a nunnery:' and I think our young master was not in the wrong but in marrying without a portion.

Nurse. That was the quarrel, I believe, Sampson: upon this, my old lord would never see him; disinherited him; took his younger brother, Carlos, into favour, whom he never car'd for before; and at last forc'd Biron to go to the siege of Candy, where he was killed.

Samp. Alack-a-day, poor gentleman.

Nurse. For which my old lord hates her, as if she had been the cause of his going thither.

Samp. Alas, alas, poor lady! she has suffer'd for't she has liv'd a great while a widow.

Nurse. A great while indeed, for a young woman. Sampson.

Samp. Gad so! here they come; I won't venture to be seen.

Enter Count Baldwin, followed by Isabella and her Child.

C. Bald. Whoever of your friends directed you,
Misguided, and abus'd you—There's your way;
I can afford to shew you out again;
What could you expect from me?

Isa. Oh, I have nothing to expect on earth!
But misery is very apt to talk:
I thought I might be heard.

C. Bald. What can you say?
Is there in eloquence, can there be in words
A recompensing pow'r, a remedy,
A reparation of the injuries,
The great calamities, that you have brought
On me, and mine? You have destroy'd those hopes
I fondly rais'd, through my declining life,
To rest my age upon? and most undone me.

Isa. I have undone myself too.

C. Bald. Speak it again;
Say still you are undone, and I will hear you,
With pleasure hear you.

Isa. Would my ruin please you?

C. Bald. Beyond all other pleasures.

Isa. Then you are pleas'd—for I am most undone.

C. Bald. I pray'd but for revenge, and heav'n has
heard,

And sent it to my wishes: these grey hairs
Would have gone down in sorrow to the grave,
Which you have dug for me without the thought,
The thought of leaving you more wretched here.

Isa. Indeed I am most wretched—' When I lost
' My husband——

' *C. Bald.* Would he had never been;

' Or never had been yours.

' *Isa.* I then believ'd

' The measure of my sorrow then was full:

' But every moment of my growing days

' Makes room for woes, and adds 'em to the sum.'

I lost with Biron all the joys of life:

But now its last supporting means are gone,

All the kind helps that heav'n in pity rais'd,

In charitable pity to our wants,

At last have left us : now bereft of all,
 But this last trial of a cruel father,
 To save us both from sinking. Oh, my child !
 Kneel with me, knock at nature in his heart :
 Let the resemblance of a once-lov'd son
 Speak in this little one, who never wrong'd you,
 And plead the fatherless and widow's cause.
 Oh, if you ever hope to be forgiven,
 As you will need to be forgiven too,
 Forget our faults, that heaven may pardon yours.

C. Bald. How dare you mention heav'n ! Call to mind
 Your perjurd vows ; your plighted, broken faith
 To heav'n, and all things holy : were you not
 Devoted, wedded to a life recluse,
 The sacred habit on, profess'd and sworn
 A votary for ever ? Can you think
 The sacrilegious wretch, that robs the shrine,
 Is thunder-proof ?

Isa. There, there, began my woes.
 ' Let women all take warning at my fate ;
 ' Never resolve, or think they can be safe,
 ' Within the reach and tongue of tempting men.'
 Oh ! had I never seen my Biron's face,
 Had he not tempted me, I had not fall'n,
 But still continued innocent, and free
 Of a bad world, which only he had pow'r
 To reconcile, and make me try again. [thoughts

C. Bald. Your own inconstancy, ' your graceless
 ' Debauch'd and' reconcil'd you to the world :
 He had no hand to bring you back again,
 But what you gave him. Circe, you prevail'd
 Upon his honest mind, transforming him
 From virtue, and himself, into what shapes
 You had occasion for ; and what he did
 Was first inspir'd by you. ' A cloyster was
 ' Too narrow for the work you had in hand :
 ' Your business was more general ; the whole world
 ' To be the scene : therefore you spread your charms
 ' To catch his soul, to be the instrument,
 ' The wicked instrument of your cursed flight.
 ' Not that you valued him ; for any one,
 ' Who could have serv'd that turn, had been as welcome.'

Isa. Oh ! I have sins to heav'n, but none to him.

C. Bald

C. Bald. Had my wretched son
Marry'd a beggar's bastard; taken her
Out of her rags, and made her of my blood,
The mischief might have ceas'd, and ended there.
But bringing you into a family,
Enails a curse upon the name, and house,
That takes you in: the only part of me
That did receive you, perish'd for his crime.
Tis a defiance to offended heav'n,

Sorely to pity you: Your sins pursue you:
The heaviest judgments that can fall upon you,
Are your just lot, and but prepare your doom:
Expect 'em, and despair——Sirrah, rogue,
How durst thou disobey me! [To the porter.

Isa. Not for myself——for I am past the hopes
Of being heard——but for this innocent——
And then I never will disturb you more.

C. Bald. I almost pity the unhappy child:
But being yours——

Isa. Look on him as your son's;
And let his part in him answer for mine.
Oh, save, defend him, save him from the wrongs
That fall upon the poor.

C. Bald. It touches me——
And I will save him——But to keep him safe;
Never come near him more.

Isa. What! take him from me!
No, we must never part: tis the last hold
Of comfort I have left; and when he fails,
All goes along with him: Oh! 'could you be
The tyrant to divorce life from my life?'
I live but in my child.

No, let me pray in vain, and beg my bread
From door to door, to feed his daily wants,
Rather than always lose him.

C. Bald. Then have your child, and feed him with your
You, rascal, slave, what do I keep you for? [prayer.
How came this woman in?

Samp. Why indeed, my lord, I did as good as tell
her, before, my thoughts upon the matter——

C. Bald. Did you so, Sir? Now then tell her mine;
Tell her I sent you to her. [Thrusts him towards her.
There's one more to provide for.

Samp. Good, my lord, what I did was in perfect obedience to the old nurse there. I told her what it would come to.

C. Bald. What ! this was a plot upon me. And you too, beldam, were you in the conspiracy ? Begone, go all together ; ‘ I have provided you an equipage, now ‘ set up when you please. She’s old enough to do you ‘ service ; I have none for her. The wide world lie ‘ before you : begone ;’ take any road but this to beg or starve in—‘ I shall be glad to hear of you :’ but never never see me more— [He drives ’em off before him

Isa. Then heav’n have mercy on me !

[Exit with her Child, followed by Sampson and Nurse

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

S C E N E *continues.*

Enter Villeroy, and Carlos, meeting.

VILLEROY.

MY friend, I fear to ask—— but Isabella——
The lovely widow’s tears, her orphan’s cries,
Thy father must feel for them—— No, I read,
I read their cold reception in thine eyes——
Thou pitiest them——tho’ Baldwin——but I spare him
For Carlos’ sake ; thou art no son of his.
There needs not this to endear thee more to me. [*Embrace*

Car. My Villeroy, the fatherless, the widow,
Are terms not understood within these gates——
You must forgive him ; Sir, he thinks this woman
Is Biron’s fate, that hurried him to death——
I must not think on’t, lest my friendship stagger.
My friend’s, my sister’s, mutual advantage
Have reconcil’d my bosom to its task.

Vil. Advantage ! think not I intend to raise
An interest from Isabella’s wrongs.
Your father may have interested ends
In her undoing ; but my heart has none ;
Her happiness must be my interest,
And that I would restore.

Car. Why so I mean.
These hardships that my father lays upon her,
I’m sorry for ; and wish I could prevent ;

But he will have his way.

Since there's no hope from her prosperity, her change of fortune may alter the condition of her thoughts, and make for you.

Vil. She is above her fortune.

Car. Try her again. Women commonly love according to the circumstances they are in.

Vil. Common women may.

'*Car.* Since you are not accessory to the injustice, you may be persuaded to take the advantage of other people's crimes.'

'*Vil.* I must despise all those advantages, That indirectly can advance my love.'

No, though I live but in the hopes of her,
And languish for th' enjoyment of those hopes;

'd rather pine in a consuming want
Of what I wish, than have the blessing mine,
From any reason but consenting love.

Oh! let me never have it to remember,
I could betray her coldly to comply:

When a clear gen'rous choice bestows her on me,
I know to value the unequal'd gift:
I would not have it, but to value it.

Car. Take your own way; remember what I offer'd came from a friend,

Vil. I understand it so. I'll serve her for herself,
Without the thought of a reward [Exit.

Car. Agree that point between you. If you marry her any way, you do my business.

I know him—What his gen'rous soul intends
I ripens my plots——I'll first to Isabella.—

I must keep up appearances with her too. [Exit.

S C E N E, Isabella's House.

Enter Isabella and Nurse: Isabella's little Son at play upon the Floor.

Isa. Sooner, or later, all things pass away,
And are no more. The beggar and the king,
With equal steps, tread forward to their end:
The reconciling grave swallows distinction first, that made
us foes,

Though they appear of different natures now,
They meet at last;

Then all alike lie down in peace together.
 When will that hour of peace arrive for me !
 In heav'n I shall find it—not in heav'n,
 If my old tyrant father can dispose
 Of things above—but, there, his interest
 May be as poor as mine, and want a friend
 As much as I do here.

[Weeping]

Nurse. Good Madam, be comforted.

Isa. Do I deserve to be this out-cast wretch ?
 Abandon'd thus, and lost ? But 'tis my lot,
 The will of heav'n, and I must not complain :
 I will not for myself : let me bear all
 The violence of your wrath ! but spare my child :
 Let not my sins be visited on him :
 They are ; they must ; a general ruin falls
 On every thing about me : thou art lost,
 Poor nurse, by being near me.

Nurse. I can work, or beg, to do you service.

Isa. Could I forget
 What I have been, I might the better bear
 What I am destin'd to : I'm not the first
 That have been wretched : but to think how much
 I have been happier !—Wild hurrying thoughts
 Start every way from my distracted soul,
 To find out hope, and only meet despair.
 What answer have I ?

Enter Sampson.

Samp. Why truly, very little to the purpose : like
 Jew as he is, he says you have had more already than
 the jewels are worth : he wishes you would rather think
 of redeeming 'em, than expect any more money upon
 'em.

[Exit Sampson]

Isa. 'Tis very well——

So :—Poverty at home, and debts abroad !
 My present fortune bad ; my hopes yet worse !
 What will become of me !
 This ring is all I have left of value now :
 'Twas given me by my husband : his first gift
 Upon our marriage : I've always kept it,
 With my best care, the treasure next my life :
 And now but part with it to support life,
 Which only can be dearer. Take it, nurse,

'Tw

Twill stop the cries of hunger for a time ;
 Provide us bread, and bring a short reprieve,
 To put off the bad day of beggary,
 That will come on too soon.' Take care of it :
 Manage it as the last remaining friend
 That would relieve us. [*Exit Nurse.*] Heav'n can only
 tell

Where we shall find another—My dear boy !
 The labour of his birth was lighter to me
 Than of my fondness now ; my fears for him
 Are more, than in that hour of hovering death,
 They could be for myself—He minds me not.
 His little sports have taken up his thoughts :
 Oh, may they never feel the pangs of mine.
 Thinking will make me mad : why must I think,
 When no thought brings me comfort ?

Nurse returns.

Nurse. Oh, Madam ! you are utterly ruin'd and undone ;
 your creditors of all kinds are come in upon you : they
 have muster'd up a regiment of rogues, that are come
 to plunder your house, and seize upon all you have
 in the world ; they are below ? What will you do,
 Madam ?

Isa. Do ! nothing ; no, for I am born to suffer.

Enter Carlos to her.

Car. Oh, sister ! can I call you by that name,
 And be the son of this inhuman man,
 Inveterate to your ruin ? Do not think
 I am a-kin to his barbarity :
 I must abhor my father's usage of you :
 And from my bleeding honest heart, must pity,
 Pity your lost condition. Can you think
 Of any way that I may serve you in ?
 But what enrages most my sense of grief,
 My sorrow for your wrongs, is, that my father,
 Fore-knowing well the storm that was to fall,
 Has order'd me not to appear for you.

Isa. I thank your pity ; my poor husband fell
 For disobeying him, do not you stay
 To venture his displeasure too for me.

Car. You must resolve on something—

[*Exit.*]

Isa. Let my fate

Determine for me ; I shall be prepar'd,
The worst that can befall me, is to die : [A noise.

‘ When once it comes to that, it matters not
‘ Which way ’tis brought about : whether I starve,
‘ Or hang, or drown, the end is still the same ;
‘ Plagues, poison, famine, are but several names
‘ Of the same thing, and all conclude in death.
‘ ———But sudden death ! Oh, for a sudden death,
‘ To cheat my persecutors of their hopes,
‘ Th’ expected pleasure of beholding me
‘ Long in my pains, ling’ring in misery.
‘ It will not be, that is deny’d me too.’

Hark, they are coming ; let the torrent roar :
It can but overwhelm me in its fall ;
And life and death are now alike to me.

[*Exeunt, the Nurse leading the child.*

SCENE opens, and shows Carlos and Villeroy
with the Officers.

Vil. No farther violence——

The debt in all is but four thousand crowns :
Were it ten times the sum, I think you know
My fortune very well can answer it.
You have my word for this : I’ll see you paid.

Off. That’s as much as we can desire : so we have the
Money, no matter whence it comes.

Vil. To-morrow you shall have it.

Car. Thus far all’s well——

Enter Isabella, and Nurse with the Child.

And now my sister comes to crown the work. [*Aside.*

Isa. Where are the raving blood-hounds, that pursue
In a full cry, gaping to swallow me ?

I meet your rage, and come to be devour’d :

Say, which way are you to dispose of me !

To dungeons, darkness, death !

Car. Have patience.

Isa. Patience !

Off. You’ll excuse us, we are but in our office :
Debts must be paid.

Isa. My death will pay you all. [*Distractedly.*

Off. While there is law to be had, people will have
their own.

Vil.

Vil. 'Tis very fit they should; but pray be gone.

To-morrow certainly——

[*Exeunt officers.*]

Isa. What of to-morrow?

'Am I then the sport,

'The game of fortune, and her laughing fools?

'The common spectacle, to be expos'd

'From day to day, and baited for the mirth

'Of the lewd rabble?' Must I be reserv'd

For fresh afflictions?

Vil. For long happiness

Of life, I hope.

Isa. There is no hope for me.

The load grows light, when we resolve to bear;

I'm ready for my trial.

Car. Pray be calm,

And know your friends.

Isa. My friends! Have I a friend?

Car. A faithful friend; in your extremest need,

Villeroy came in to save you——

Isa. Save me! How?

Car. By satisfying all your creditors.

Isa. Which way? For what?

Vil. Let me be understood,

And then condemn me: you have given me leave

To be your friend; and in that only name,

I now appear before you. I could wish

There had been no occasion of a friend,

Because I know you hate to be oblig'd;

And still more loth to be oblig'd by me.

Isa. 'Twas that I would avoid——

[*Aside.*]

Vil. I'm most unhappy, that my services

Can be suspected to design upon you;

I have no farther ends than to redeem you

From fortune's wrongs; to shew myself at last,

What I have long profess'd to be, your friend:

Allow me that; and to convince you more,

That I intend only your interest,

Forgive what I have done, and in amends

(If that can make you any, that can please you)

I'll tear myself for ever from my hopes,

Stifle this flaming passion in my soul,

'That has so long broke out to trouble you,'

And mention my unlucky love no more.

Isa.

Isa. This generosity will ruin me.

[*Aside.*

Vil. Nay, if the blessing of my looking on you
Disturbs your peace, I will do all I can
To keep away, and never see you more.

Car. You must not go.

Vil. Could Isabella speak
Those few short words, I should be rooted here,
And never move but upon her commands.

Car. Speak to him, sister; do not throw away
A fortune that invites you to be happy.
In your extremity he begs your love;
And has deserv'd it nobly. Think upon
Your lost condition, helpless and alone.
Tho' now you have a friend, the time must come
That you will want one; him you may secure
To be a friend, a father, a husband to you.

Isa. A husband!

Car. You have discharg'd your duty to the dead,
And to the living; 'tis a wilfulness
Not to give way to your necessities,
That force you to this marriage.

Nur. What must become of this poor innocence?

[*To the child.*

Car. He wants a father to protect his youth,
And rear him up to virtue: You must bear
The future blame, and answer to the world,
When you refuse the easy honest means
Of taking care of him.

' *Nur.* Of him and me,
' And every one that must depend upon you;
' Unless you please now to provide for us,
' We must all perish.'

Car. Nor would I press you——

Isa. Do not think I need
Your reasons, to confirm my gratitude;
I have a soul that's truly sensible
Of your great worth, and busy to contrive, [To *Vil.*
If possible, to make you a return.

Vil. Oh, easily possible!

Isa. It cannot be your way: my pleasures are
Bury'd, and cold in my dead husband's grave;
And I should wrong the truth, myself, and you,

To say that I can ever love again.
 I owe this declaration to myself:
 But as a proof that I owe all to you,
 If after what I've said, you can resolve
 To think me worth your love—Where am I going?
 You cannot think it; 'tis impossible.

Vil. Impossible!

Isa. You should not ask me now, nor should I grant;
 I am so much oblig'd, that to consent
 Wou'd want a name to recommend the gift:
 'Twou'd shew me poor, indebted, and compell'd,
 Designing, mercenary; and I know
 You would not wish to think I could be bought.

Vil. Be bought! Where is the price that can pretend
 To bargain for you? Not in fortune's power.
 The joys of Heav'n, and love, must be bestow'd:
 They are not to be sold, and cannot be deserv'd.

Isa. Some other time I'll hear you on this subject.

Vil. Nay, then there is no time so fit for me.

[*Following her.*]

Since you consent to hear me, hear me now;
 That you may grant: you are above
 The little forms which circumscribe your sex;
 We differ but in time, let that be mine.

Isa. You think fit
 To get the better of me, and you shall;
 Since you will have it so—I will be yours.

Vil. I take you at your word.

Isa. I give you all
 My hand; and would I had a heart to give:
 But if it ever can return again,
 'Tis wholly yours.

Vil. Oh, ecstasy of joy!
 Leave that to me. If all my services,
 ' If prosperous days, and kind indulging nights;
 If all that man can fondly say or do,
 Can beget love, love shall be born again.
 Oh, Carlos! now my friend, and brother too:
 And, nurse, I have eternal thanks for thee.

Send for the priest—

[*Nurse goes out in haste.*]

This night you must be mine.

Let

Let me command in this, and all my life
Shall be devoted to you.

Isa. On your word,
Never to press me to put off these weeds,
Which best become my melancholy thoughts,
You shall command me.

Vil. Witness Heaven and earth
Against my soul, when I do any thing
To give you a disquiet.

Car. I long to wish you joy.

Vil. You'll be a witness of my happiness?

Car. For once I'll be my sister's father,
And give her to you.

Vil. Next, my Isabella,
Be near my heart: I am for ever yours.

[*Exeunt.*

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE, *Count Baldwin's house.*

Enter Count Baldwin and Carlos.

COUNT BALDWIN.

MARRIED to Villeroy, say'st thou?

Car. Yes, my lord.

Last night the priest perform'd his holy office,
And made 'em one.

C. Bald. Misfortune join 'em!
And may her violated vows pull down
A lasting curse, a constancy of sorrow
On both their heads—' I have not yet forgot
' Thy slighted passion, the refus'd alliance;
' But having her, we are reveng'd at full.
' Heav'n will pursue her still, and Villeroy
' Share the judgments she calls down.'

Car. Soon he'll hate her;
Tho' warm and violent in his raptures now;
When full enjoyment palls his sicken'd sense,
And reason with satiety returns,
Her cold constrain'd acceptance of his hand

Will gall his pride, which (tho' of late o'erpower'd
By stronger passions) will, as they grow weak,
Rise in full force, and pour its vengeance on her.

C. Bald. Now, Carlos, take example to thy aid;
Let Biron's disobedience, and the curse
He took into his bosom, prove a warning,
A monitor to thee, to keep thy duty
Firm and unshaken.

Car. May those rankling wounds
Which Biron's disobedience gave my father,
Be heal'd by me.

C. Bald. With tears I thank thee, Carlos—
And may'st thou ever feel those inward joys,
Thy duty gives thy father—but, my son,
We must not let resentment choak our justice;
'Tis fit that Villeroy know he has no claim
From me, in right of Isabella——Biron,
(Whose name brings tears) when wedded to this woman,
By me abandon'd, sunk the little fortune
His uncle left, in vanity and fondness:
I am possess'd of those your brother's papers,
Which now are Villeroy's, and shou'd ought remain,
In justice it is his; from me to him
You shall convey them——follow me, and take 'em.

[*Exit C. Baldwin.*]

Car. Yes, I will take 'em; but e'er I part with 'em,
I will be sure my interest will not suffer
By these his high, refin'd, fantastic notions
Of equity and right—What a paradox
Is man! My father here, who boasts his honour,
And ev'n but now was warm in praise of justice,
Can steel his heart against the widow's tears,
And infant's wants; the widow and the infant
Of Biron; of his son, his fav'rite son.
'Tis ever thus weak minds, who court opinion,
And, dead to virtuous feeling, hide their wants
In pompous affectation—Now to Villeroy—
E'er this his friends, for he is much belov'd,
Croud to his house, and with their nuptial songs
Awake the wedded pair: I'll join the throng,
And in my face, at least, bear joy and friendship. [*Exit.*]

SCENE, *a ball in Villeroy's house. A band of music, with the friends of Villeroy.*

Enter a Servant.

1st Fr. Where's your master, my good friend?

Ser. Within, Sir,

Preparing for the welcome of his friends.

1st Fr. Acquaint him we are here: yet stay,
The voice of music gently shall surprize him,
And breathe our salutations to his ear.
Strike up the strain to Villeroy's happiness,
To Isabella's — But he's here already.

Enter Villeroy.

Vil. My friends, let me embrace you:
Welcome all —

What means this preparation? *[Seeing the Music.]*

1st Fr. A slight token

Of our best wishes for your growing happiness —
You must permit our friendship —

Vil. You oblige me —

1st Fr. But your lovely bride,
That wonder of her sex, she must appear.
And add new brightness to this happy morning.

Vil. She is not yet prepar'd; and let her will,
My worthiest friend, determine her behaviour;
To win, and not to force her disposition,
Has been my seven years task. She will anon,
Speak welcome to you all. The music stays.

[Villeroy and his friends seat themselves.]

E P I T H A L A M I U M.

A I R.

Woman. Let all, let all be gay,
Begin the rapt'rous lay;
Let mirth, let mirth and joy,
Each happy hour employ,
Of this fair bridal day.

Man. Ye love-wing'd hours, your flight,
Your downy flight prepare,
Bring ev'ry soft delight
To sooth the brave and fair.

Hail happy pair, thus in each other blest;
Be ever free from care, of ev'ry joy possesst.

Vil. I thank you for this proof of your affection:
I am so much transported with the thoughts
Of what I am, I know not what I do.

My Isabella!—but possessing her,
Who wou'd not lose himself?—You'll pardon me—
Oh! there was nothing wanting to my soul,
But the kind wishes of my loving friends—
'But our collation waits;' where's Carlos now?
Methinks I am but half myself, without him.

ad Fr. This is wonderful! Married a night and a day,
and yet in raptures.

Vil. Oh! when you all get wives, and such as mine,
(If such another woman can be found)
You will rave too, doat on the dear content,
And prattle in their praise out of all bounds.
'I cannot speak my blifs!' 'Tis in my head,
' 'Tis in my heart, and takes up all my soul—
' The labour of my fancy. You'll pardon me;
' About some twelve months hence I may begin
' To speak plain sense—Walk in, and honour me.'

Enter Isabella.

My Isabella! Oh, the joy of my heart,
That I have leave at last to call you mine!
'When I give up that title to the charms
'Of any other wish, be nothing mine:'
But let me look upon you, view you well.
This is a welcome gallantry indeed!

I durst not ask, but it was kind to grant,
Just at this time; dispensing with your dress
Upon this second day to greet our friends.

Isa. Black might be ominous;
I would not bring ill luck along with me.

Vil. Oh! if your melancholy thoughts could change
With shifting of your dress—Time has done cures
Incredible this way, and may again.

Isa. I could have wish'd, if you had thought it fit,
Our marriage had not been so public.

Vil. Do not you grudge me my excess of love;
That was a cause it could not be conceal'd:
Besides, 'twould injure the opinion
I have of my good fortune, having you;
And lessen it in other people's thoughts,

‘ Busy on such occasions to enquire,
 ‘ Had it been private.’

Isa. I have no more to say.

Enter Carlos.

Vil. My Carlos too, who came in to the support
 Of our bad fortune, has an honest right,
 In better times, to share the good with us.

Car. I come to claim that right, to share your joy ;
 To wish you joy ; and find it in myself ;

‘ For a friend’s happiness reflects a warmth,

‘ A kindly comfort, into every heart

‘ That is not envious.

Vil. ‘ He must be a friend,

‘ Who is not envious of a happiness

‘ So absolute as mine ; but if you are,

‘ (As I have reason to believe you are)

‘ Concern’d for my well-being, there’s the cause ;

‘ Thank her for what I am, and what must be.’

[*Music flourish.*]

I see you mean a second entertainment.

My dearest Isabella, you must hear

The rapture of my friends ; from thee they spring ;

Thy virtues have diffus’d themselves around,

And made them all as happy as myself.

Isa. I feel their favours with a grateful heart,
 And willingly comply.

RECITATIVE.

Take the gifts the gods intend ye ;

Grateful meet the proffer’d joy ;

Truth and honour shall attend ye ;

Charms that ne’er can change or cloy.

DUETTO.

Man. Oh, the raptures of possessing,
 Taking beauty to thy arms !

Woman. Oh the joy, the lasting blessing,
 When with virtue beauty charms !

Man. Purer flames shall gently warm ye ;

Woman. Love and honour both shall charm thee.

Both. Oh the raptures of, &c. &c.

CHORUS.

CHORUS.

Far from hence be care and strife,
 Far, the pang that tortures life :
 May the circling minutes prove
 One sweet round of peace and love !

Car. 'Tis fine, indeed !

You'll take my advice another time, sister.

Vil. What have you done ? A rising smile
 Stole from her thoughts, just red'ning on her cheek,
 And you have dash'd it.

Car. I am sorry for't.

Vil. My friends, will you forgive me, when I own,
 I must prefer her peace to all the world ?

Come, Isabella, let us lead the way :

Within we'll speak our welcome to our friends,

And crown the happy festival with joy.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, a Room.

Enter Sampson and Nurse.

Samp. Ay, marry nurse, here's a master indeed ! He'll
 double our wages for us ! If he comes on as fast with my
 lady, as he does with his servants, we are all in the way
 to be well pleased.

Nurse. He's in a rare humour ; if she be in as good a
 one—

Samp. If she be, marry, we may e'en say, they have
 begot it upon one another.

Nurse. Well ; why don't you go back again to your
 old count ? You thought your throat cut, I warrant you,
 to be turn'd out of a nobleman's service.

Samp. For the future, I will never serve in a house,
 where the master or mistress of it lie single : they are
 out of humour with every body when they are not pleased
 themselves. Now, this matrimony makes every thing
 go well. There's mirth and money stirring about, when
 those matters go as they should do.

Nurse. Indeed, this matrimony, Sampson—

Samp. Ah, nurse ! this matrimony is a very good
 thing—but, what, now my lady is married, I hope we
 shall have company come to the house : there's some-
 thing always coming from one gentleman or other upon

those occasions, if my lady loves company. This feasting looks well, nurse.

Nurse. Odso, my master! we must not be seen. [*Exit*

Enter Villeroy with a letter, and Isabella.

Vil. I must away this moment—see his letter, Sign'd by himself: alas! he could no more; My brother's desperate, and cannot die In peace, but in my arms.

Isa. So suddenly!

Vil. Suddenly taken, on the road to Brussels, To do us honour, love; unfortunate! Thus to be torn from thee, and all those charms, Tho' cold to me and dead.

Isa. I'm sorry for the cause.

Vil. Oh! could I think, Could I persuade myself that your concern For me, or for my absence, were the spring, The fountain of these melancholy thoughts, My heart would dance, spite of the sad occasion, And be a gay companion in my journey; But——

Enter Carlos from supper.

My good Carlos, why have you left my friends?

Car. They are departed home.

They saw some sudden melancholy news Had stolen the lively colour from your cheek—— You had withdrawn, the bride, alarm'd, had follow'd: Mere ceremony had been constraint; and this Good-natur'd rudeness——

Vil. Was the more obliging.

There, Carlos, is the cause.

[*Gives the letter.*

Car. Unlucky accident!

Th' archbishop of Malines, your worthy brother—— With him to-night! Sister, will you permit it?

Vil. It must be so.

Isa. You hear it must be so.

Vil. Oh, that it must!

Car. To leave your bride so soon!

Vil. But having the possession of my love, I am the better able to support My absence, in the hopes of my return.

Car. Your stay will be but short?

Vil. It will seem long !

The longer that my Isabella sighs :
I shall be jealous of this rival, grief,
' That you indulge and fondle in my absence.'
It takes so full possession of thy heart,
There is not room enough for mighty love.

Enter Servant, and bows,

My horses wait : farewell, my love ! You, Carlos,
Will act a brother's part, 'till I return,
And be the guardian here. All, all I have
That's dear to me, I give up to your care.

Car. And I receive her as a friend and brother.

Vil. Nay, stir not, love ; for the night air is cold,
And the dews fall—Here be our end of parting ;
Carlos will see me to my horse. [*Exit with Carlos.*]

Isa. Oh, may thy brother better all thy hopes ! Adieu.
' A sudden melancholy bakes my blood !
' Forgive me, Villeroy——I do not find
' That chearful gratitude thy service asks :
' Yet, if I know my heart, and sure I do,
' 'Tis not averse from honest obligation.
' I'll to my chamber, and to bed ; my mind,
' My harrass'd mind, is weary.' [*Exit.*]

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

SCENE, *the street.*

Enter Biron and Belford, just arriv'd.

BIRON.

THE longest day will have an end ; we are got home
at last.

Bel. We have got our legs at liberty ; and liberty is
home, where'er we go ; though mine lies most in Eng-
land.

Bir. Pray let me call this yours : for what I can com-
mand in Brussels, you shall find your own. I have a fa-
ther here, who, perhaps, after seven years absence, and
costing him nothing in my travels, may be glad to see

me. You know my story—How does my disguise become me?

Bel. Just as you would have it; 'tis natural, and will conceal you.

Bir. To-morrow you shall be sure to find me here, as early as you please. This is the house, you have observ'd the street.

Bel. I warrant you; I han't many visits to make, before I come to you.

Bir. To-night I have some affairs, that will oblige me to be private.

Bel. A good bed is the privatest affair that I desire to be engaged in to-night; your directions will carry me to my lodgings. [Exit.

Bir. Good night, my friend. [Knocks.
The long expected moment is arriv'd!
And if all here is well, my past sorrows
Will only heighten my excess of joy;
And nothing will remain to wish or hope for!

[Knocks again

Enter Sampson.

Sam. Who's there? What would you have?

Bir. Is your lady at home, friend?

Sam. Why, truly friend, it is my employment to answer impertinent questions: but for my lady's being at home, or no, that's just as my lady pleases.

Bir. But how shall I know, whether it pleases her or no?

Sam. Why, if you'll take my word for it, you may carry your errand back again: she never pleases to see any body at this time of night, that she does not know; and by your dress and appearance, I am sure, you must be a stranger to her.

Bir. But I have business; and you don't know how that may please her.

Sam. Nay, if you have business, she is the best judge whether your business will please her or no: therefore I will proceed in my office, and know of my lady, whether or no she is pleas'd to be at home, or no— [Going.

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Who's that you are so busy withal? Methinks you might have found out an answer in fewer words:
but

but, Sampson, you love to hear yourself prate sometimes, as well as your betters, that I must say for you. Let me come to him. Who would you speak with, stranger?

Bir. With you, mistress, if you could help me to speak to your lady.

Nurse. Yes, Sir, I can help you in a civil way : but can nobody do your business but my lady ?

Bir. Not so well ; but if you carry her this ring, she'll know my business better.

Nurse. There's no love-letter in it, I hope : you look like a civil gentleman. In an honest way, I may bring you an answer. [Exit.

Bir. My old nurse, only a little older ! ' They say ' the tongue grows always : mercy on me ! then her's is ' seven years longer, since I left her.' Yet there's something in these servants' folly pleases me : the cautious conduct of the family appears, and speaks in their impertinence. Well, mistress——

Nurse returns.

Nurse. I have deliver'd your ring, Sir ; pray heav'n, you bring no bad news along with you.

Bir. Quite contrary, I hope.

Nurse. Nay, I hope so too ; but my lady was very much surpriz'd when I gave it her. Sir, I am but a servant, as a body may say ; but if you'll walk in, that I may shut the doors, for we keep very orderly hours ; I can show you into the parlour, and help you to an answer, perhaps as soon as those that are wiser. [Exit.

Bir. I'll follow you——

Now all my spirits hurry to my heart,

And every sense has taken the alarm.

At this approaching interview !

Heav'ns ! how I tremble !

[Exit into the house.

SCENE, a chamber.

Enter Isabella.

Isa. I've heard of witches, magic spells, and charms, That have made nature start from her old course :

The sun has been eclips'd, the moon drawn down

From her career, still paler, and subdu'd

To the abuses of this under world !

Now I believe all possible. This ring,

This

This little ring, with necromantic force,
Has rais'd the ghost of pleasure to my fears :
Conjur'd the sense of honour, and of love,
Into such shapes, they fright me from myself !
I dare not think of them——

“ I'll call you when I want you.” [Servant goes out.

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Madam, the gentleman's below.

Isa. I had forgot, pray let me speak with him.

[*Exit Nurse.*

This ring was the first present of my love
To Biron, my first husband : I must blush
To think I have a second. Biron dy'd
(Still to my loss) at Candy ; there's my hope.
Oh, do I live to hope that he dy'd there !
It must be so : he's dead, and this ring left
By his last breath, to some known faithful friend,
To bring me back again ;

[*Biron introduc'd——Nurse retires.*

That's all I have to trust to——

My fears were woman's——I have view'd him all :
And let me, let me say it to myself,
I live again, and rise but from his tomb.

Bir. Have you forgot me quite ?

Isa. Forgot you !

Bir. Then farewell my disguise, and my misfortunes.

My Isabella !

[*He goes to her ; she shrieks, and falls in a swoon.*

Isa. Ha !

Bir. Oh ! come again :

Thy Biron summons thee to life and love ;

“ Once I had charms to wake thee :”

Thy once lov'd, ever-loving husband calls——

Thy Biron speaks to thee.

Isa. My husband ! Biron ?

Bir. Excess of love and joy, for my return,
Has overpower'd her——I was to blame :

To take thy sex's softness unprepar'd :

But sinking thus, thus dying in my arms,

This ecstasy has made my welcome more

Than words could say : words may be counterfeit,

False coin'd, and current only from the tongue,

Without

Without the mind ; but passion's in the soul,
And always speaks the heart.

Isa. Where have I been ? Why do you keep him
from me ?

I know his voice : my life upon the wing,
Hears the soft lure that brings me back again :

'Tis he himself, my Biron, the dear man !

My true-lov'd husband ! Do I hold you fast,
Never to part again ? ' Can I believe it ?

' Nothing but you could work so great a change.

' There's more than life itself in dying here.'

If I must fall, death's welcome in these arms.

Bir. Live ever in these arms.

Isa. But pardon me,

Excuse the wild disorder of my soul :

The joy, the strange surprizing joy of seeing you,

Of seeing you again, distracted me——

Bir. Thou everlasting goodness !

Isa. Answer me :

What hand of Providence has brought you back

To your own home again ? O, satisfy

Th' impatience of my heart : I long to know

The story of your sufferings. ' You would think

' Your pleasures sufferings, so long remov'd

' From Isabella's love.' But tell me all,

For every thought confounds me.

Bir. My best life ; at leisure, all.

Isa. We thought you dead ; kill'd at the siege

of Candy.

Bir. There I fell among the dead ;

But hopes of life reviving from my wounds,

I was preserv'd but to be made a slave :

I often writ to my hard father, but never had

An answer, I writ to thee too——

Isa. What a world of woe

Had been prevented, but in hearing from you !

Bir. Alas ! thou couldst not help me.

Isa. You do not know how much I could ha' done ;

At least, I'm sure I could have suffer'd all :

I would have sold myself to slavery,

Without redemption ; giv'n up my child,

The dearest part of me to basest wants——

Bir.

Bir. My little boy!

Isa. My life, but to have heard
You were alive——which now too late I find. [*Aside.*

Bir. No more, my love, complaining of the past,
We lose the present joy. 'Tis over price
Of all my pains, that thus we meet again——
I have a thousand things to say to thee——

Isa. Wou'd I were past the hearing. [*Aside.*

Bir. How does my child, my boy, my father too?
I hear he's living still.

Isa. Well both, both well;
And may he prove a father to your hopes,
Though we have found him none.

Bir. Come, no more tears.

Isa. Seven long years of sorrow for your loss,
Have mourn'd with me——

Bir. And all my days behind
Shall be employ'd in a kind recompence
For thy afflictions.—Can't I see my boy?

Isa. He's gone to bed: I'll have him brought to you.

Bir. To-morrow I shall see him; I want rest
myself, after my weary pilgrimage.

Isa. Alas! what shall I get for you?

Bir. Nothing but rest, my love! To night I would not
Be known, if possible, to your family:
I see my Nurse is with you; her welcome
Wou'd be tedious at this time;
To-morrow will do better.

Isa. I'll dispose of her, and order every thing
As you wou'd have it. [*Exit.*

Bir. Grant me but life, good heav'n, and give the
means,
To make this wond'rous goodness some amends:
And let me then forget her, if I can!
O! she deserves of me much more, than I
Can lose for her, though I again cou'd venture
A father, and his fortune, for her love!
You wretched fathers, blind as fortune all!
Not to perceive that such a woman's worth
Weighs down the portions you provide your sons:
What is your trash, what all your heaps of gold,

Compar'd

Compar'd to this, my heart-felt happiness ?

[*Bursts into tears.*]

What has she, in my absence, undergone ?

I must not think, of that ; it drives me back
Upon myself, the fated cause of all.

Isabella returns.

Isa. I have obey'd your pleasure ;
Every thing is ready for you.

Bir. I can want nothing here ; possessing thee,
All my desires are carry'd to their aim
Of happiness ; there's no room for a wish,
But to continue still this blessing to me :
I know the way, my love, ' I shall sleep sound.'

Isa. Shall I attend you.

Bir. By no means ;
I've been so long a slave to others pride,
To learn, at least, to wait upon myself ;
You'll make haste after—

[*Goes in.*]

Isa. I'll but say my prayers, and follow you——
My prayers ! no, I must never pray again.
Prayers have their blessings to reward our hopes,
But I have nothing left to hope for more.
What heav'n cou'd give, I have enjoy'd ; but now
The baneful planet rises on my fate,
And what's to come, is a long line of woe
Yet I may shorten it——

I promis'd him to follow—— him !
Is he without a name ? Biron, my husband,
To follow him to bed——my husband ! ha !
What then is Villeroy ? But yesterday
That very bed receiv'd him for its lord,
' Yet a warm witness of my broken vows.'
Oh, Biron, hadst thou come but one day sooner,
I wou'd have follow'd thee through beggary,
Through all the chances of this weary life ;
Wander'd the many ways of wretchedness
With thee, to find a hospitable grave ;
For that's the only bed that's left me now.

[*Weeping.*]

——What's to be done—for something must be done.

Two husbands ! yet not one ! By both enjoy'd,
And yet a wife to neither ! Hold my brain——
' This is to live in common ! Very beasts,

' That

' That welcome all they meet, make just such wives.
 ' My reputation ! Oh, 'twas all was left me :
 ' The virtuous pride of an uncensur'd life ;
 ' Which, the dividing tongues of Biron's wrongs,
 ' And Villeroy's resentments, tear afunder,
 ' To gorge the throats of the blaspheming rabble.
 ' This is the best of what can come to-morrow,
 ' Besides old Baldwin's triumph in my ruin :
 ' I cannot bear it——
 ' Therefore no morrow : ' Ha ! a lucky thought
 Works the right way to rid me of 'em all ;
 All the reproaches, infamies, and scorns,
 That every tongue and finger will find for me.
 Let the just horror of my apprehensions
 But keep me warm——no matter what can come.
 'Tis but a blow——yet I will see him first——
 Have a last look to heighten my despair,
 And then to rest for ever——

Biron meets her.

Bir. Despair and rest for ever ! Isabella !
 These words are far from thy condition ;
 And be they ever so. I heard thy voice,
 And could not bear thy absence : come, my love !
 You have staid long, there's nothing, nothing sure
 Now to despair of in succeeding fate.

Isa. I am contented to be miserable,
 But not this way : I've been too long abus'd,
 And can believe no more.
 Let me sleep on to be deceiv'd no more.

Bir. Look up, my love, I never did deceive thee,
 Nor ever can ; believe thyself, thy eyes
 That first inflam'd, and lit me to my love,
 Those stars, that still must guide me to my joys.

Isa. And me to my undoing : I look round
 And find no path, but leading to the grave.

Bir. I cannot understand thee.

' *Isa.* My good friends above,
 ' I thank 'em, have at last found out a way
 ' To make my fortune perfect ; having you
 ' I need no more ; my fate is finish'd here.'

' *Bir.* Both our ill-fates, I hope.'

' *Isa.* Hope is a lying, fawning flatterer,

' That shews the fair side only of our fortunes,
 ' To cheat us easier into our fall ;
 ' A trusted friend, who only can betray you ;
 ' Never believe him more.'—If marriages
 Are made in heav'n, they should be happier :
 Why was I made this wretch ?

Bir. Has marriage made thee wretched ?

Isa. Miserable, beyond the reach of comfort.

Bir. Do I live to hear thee say so ?

Isa. Why ! what did I say ?

Bir. That I have made thee miserable.

Isa. No : you are my only earthly happiness ;
 And my false tongue bely'd my honest heart,
 If it said otherwise.

Bir. And yet you said,
 Your marriage made you miserable.

Isa. I know not what I said :

I've said too much, unless I could speak all.

Bir. Thy words are wild ; my eyes, my ears, my heart,
 Were all so full of thee, so much employ'd
 In wonder of thy charms, I could not find it ;
 Now I perceive it plain——

Isa. You'll tell no body—— [Distractedly.]

Bir. Thou art not well.

Isa. Indeed I am not ; I knew that before,
 But where's the remedy ?

Bir. Rest will relieve thy cares : come, come, no more ;
 I'll banish sorrow from thee.

Isa. Banish first the cause.

Bir. Heav'n knows how willingly.

Isa. You are the only cause.

Bir. Am I the cause ? the cause of thy misfortunes ?

Isa. The fatal innocent cause of all my woes.

Bir. Is this my welcome home ? This the reward
 Of all my miseries, long labours, pains,
 And pining wants of wretched slavery,
 Which I've out-liv'd, only in hopes of thee !
 Am I thus paid at last for deathless love ?
 And call'd the cause of thy misfortunes now ?

Isa. Enquire no more ; 'twill be explain'd too soon.

[She's going off.]

Bir. What ! Can't thou leave me too ? [He stays her.]

Isa. Pray let me go :

For both our sakes, permit me——

Bir. Rack me not with imaginations
Of things impossible——Thou can'st not mean
What thou hast said—Yet something she must mean.
—'Twas madness all—Compose thyself, my love !
The fit is past ; all may be well again :
Let us to bed.

Isa. To bed ! You've rais'd the storm
Will sever us for ever : Oh, Biron !

' While I have life, still I must call you mine :
' I know I am, and always was, unworthy
' To be the happy partner of your love ;
' And now must never, never share it more.
' But, Oh ! if ever I was dear to you,
' As sometimes you have thought me,' on my knees,
(The last time I shall care to be believ'd)
I beg you, beg to think me innocent,
Clear of all crimes, that thus can banish me
From this world's comforts, in my losing you.

' *Bir.* Where will this end ?'

' *Isa.* The rugged hand of fate has got between
' Our meeting hearts, and thrusts them from their joys :
Since we must part——

Bir. Nothing shall ever part us.

' *Isa.* Parting's the least that is set down for me :
' Heav'n has decreed, and we must suffer all.'

' *Bir.* I know thee innocent : I know myself so :
' Indeed we both have been unfortunate ;
' But sure misfortunes ne'er were faults in love.'

Isa. Oh ! there's a fatal story to be told ;
Be deaf to that, as heav'n has been to me !
' And rot the tongue that shall reveal my shame :'
When thou shalt hear how much thou hast been wrong'd,
How wilt thou curse thy fond believing heart,
Tear me from the warm bosom of thy love,
And throw me like a pois'nous weed away :
' Can I bear that ? Bear to be curst and torn,
' And thrown out of thy family and name,
' Like a disease ?' Can I bear this from thee ?
' I never can :' No, all things have their end.
When I am dead, forgive and pity me.

[*Exit*
Bir

Bir. Stay, my Isabella——

What can she mean? These doubtings will distract me :
Some hidden mischief soon will burst to light ;
I cannot bear it——I must be satisfied——

'Tis she, my wife, must clear this darkness to me.

She shall—if the sad tale at last must come ;

She is my fate, and best can speak my doom. [*Exit.*]

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

Enter Biron, Nurse following him.

BIRON.

I Know enough : th' important question
Of life or death, fearful to be resolv'd,
Is clear'd to me : I see where it must end ;
And need enquire no more—Pray, let me have
Pen, ink, and paper ; I must write a-while,
And then I'll try to rest——to rest for ever !

[*Exit Nurse.*]

Poor Isabella! Now I know the cause,
The cause of thy distress, and cannot wonder
That it has turn'd thy brain. If I look back
Upon thy loss, it will distract me too.
Oh, any curse but this might be remov'd !
But 'twas the rancorous malignity
Of all ill stars combin'd, of heav'n and fate——
Hold, hold my impious tongue—Alas ! I rave :
Why do I tax the stars, or heav'n, or fate ?
They are all innocent of driving us
Into despair ; they have not urg'd my doom ;
My father and my brother are my fates,
That drive me to my ruin. They knew well
I was alive. Too well they knew how dear
My Isabella——Oh, my wife no more !
How dear her love was to me—Yet they stood,
With a malicious silent joy, stood by,
And saw her give up all my happiness,
The treasure of her beauty, to another ;
' Stood by, and saw her marry'd to another :'
Oh, cruel father ! and unnatural brother !
' Shall I not tell you that you have undone me ?'

I have but to accuse you of my wrongs,
 And then to fall forgotten——Sleep or death
 Sits heavy on me, and benumbs my pains :
 Either is welcome ; but the hand of death
 Works always sure, and best can close my eyes.

[*Exit* Biron.]

Enter Nurse and Sampson.

Nurse. Here's strange things towards, Sampson :
 what will be the end of 'em, do you think ?

Samp. Nay marry, nurse, I can't see so far ; but the
 law, I believe, is on Biron, the first husband's side.

Nurse. Yes ; no question, he has the law on his side.

Samp. For I have heard, the law says, a woman must
 be a widow, all out seven years, before she can marry
 again, according to law.

Nurse. Ay, so it does ; and our lady has not been a
 widow altogether seven years.

Samp. Why then, nurse, mark my words, and say
 I told you so : the man must have his wife again, and
 all will do well.

Nurse. But if our master Villeroy comes back again —

Samp. Why, if he does, he is not the first man that
 has had his wife taken from him.

Nurse. For fear of the worst, will you go to the old
 count, desire him to come as soon as he can ; there may
 be mischief, and he is able to prevent it.

Samp. Now you say something ; now I take you, nurse ;
 that will do well ; indeed : mischief should be prevented
 a little thing will make a quarrel, when there's a woman
 in the way. I'll about it instantly.—— [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E *drawn, shows* Biron *asleep on a couch.*

Enter Isabella.

Isa. Asleep so soon ! Oh, happy ! happy thou,
 Who thus can sleep ! I never shall sleep more ——
 If then to sleep be to be happy, he
 Who sleeps the longest, is the happiest ;
 Death is the longest sleep—Oh, have a care !
 Mischief will thrive apace. Never wake more. [*To* Bir.
 If thou didst ever love thy Isabella,
 To-morrow must be doomsday to thy peace.
 —— The sight of him disarms ev'n death itself.

The

—The starting transport of new quick'ning life
 Gives just such hopes ; and pleasure grows again
 With looking on him — Let me look my last —
 But is a look enough for parting love !
 Sure I may take a kiss — Where am I going !
 Help, help me, Villeroy ! — Mountains and seas
 Divide your love, never to meet my shame.

[Throws herself upon the floor ; after a short pause, she raises herself upon her elbow.]

What will this battle of the brain do with me !
 This little ball, this ravag'd province, long
 Cannot maintain — The globe of earth wants room
 And food for such a war — I find I'm going —
 Famine, plagues, and flames,
 Wide waste and desolation, do your work
 Upon the world, and then devour yourselves.
 — The scene shifts fast — *[She rises.]* and now 'tis bet-
 ter with me ;

Conflicting passions have at last unhing'd
 The great machine ! the soul itself seems chang'd !
 Oh, 'tis a happy revolution here !

‘ The reas'ning faculties are all depos'd ;
 ‘ Judgment, and understanding, common-sense,
 ‘ Driv'n out as traitors to the public peace.
 ‘ Now I'm reveng'd upon my memory,
 ‘ Her seat dug up, where all the images
 ‘ Of a long mis-spent life, were rising still,
 ‘ To glare a sad reflection of my crimes,
 ‘ And stab a conscience thro' 'em ! You are safe,
 ‘ You monitors of mischief ! What a change !
 ‘ Better and better still ! This is the infant state
 ‘ Of innocence, before the birth of care.
 ‘ My thoughts are smooth as the Elyfian plains,
 ‘ Without a rub : the drowsy falling streams
 ‘ Invite me to their slumbers.
 ‘ Would I were landed there — *[Sinks into a chair.]*

What noise was that ! A knocking at the gate !
 It may be Villeroy — No matter who.

Bir. Come, Isabella, come —

Isa. Hark ! I'm call'd !

Bir. You stay too long from me.

Isa. A man's voice ! in my bed ! How came he there ?
 Nothing but villainy in this bad world ; [Rises.]
 ' Coveting neighbours goods, or neighbours wives :'
 Here's phyfick for your fever.

[Draws a dagger, and goes backward to the couch]
 ' Breathing a vein is the old remedy.'
 If husbands go to heav'n,
 Where do they go that fend em ?—This to try—
[Just going to stab him, he rises, she knows him, and shrieks.]
 What do I see !

Bir. Ifabella, arm'd !

Isa. Against my husband's life !

' Who, but the wretch, most reprobate to grace,
 ' Despair e'er hardened for damnation,
 ' Could think of such a deed !—Murder my husband !'

Bir. Thou didst not think it.

Isa. Madness has brought me to the gates of hell,
 And there has left me. ' Oh, the frightful change
 ' Of my distractions ! Or is this interval
 ' Of reason but to aggravate my woes,
 ' To drive the horror back with greater force
 ' Upon my soul, and fix me mad for ever ?'

Bir. Why dost thou fly me so ?

Isa. I cannot bear his sight ; distraction, come,
 Possess me all, and take me to thyself !
 Shake off thy chains, and hasten to my aid ;—
 ' Thou art my only cure——' Like other friends,
 ' He will not come to my necessities ;
 ' Then I must go to find the tyrant out ;
 ' Which is the nearest way ?' [Running out.]

Bir. Poor Ifabella, she's not in a condition
 To give me any comfort, if she could :
 Lost to herself—as quickly I shall be
 To all the world——Horror come fast around me ;
 My mind is overcast—the gath'ring clouds
 Darken the prospect—I approach the brink,
 And soon must leap the precipice ! Oh, Heav'n !
 While yet my senses are my own, thus kneeling
 Let me implore thy mercies on my wife :
 Release her from her pangs ; and if my reason,
 O'erwhelm'd with miseries, sink before the tempest,
 Pardon those crimes despair may bring upon me. [Rises.]

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Sir, there's somebody at the door must needs speak with you ; he won't tell his name.

Bir. I come to him. [*Exit Nurse.*
'Tis Belford, I suppose ; he little knows
Of what has happen'd here ; I wanted him,
Must employ his friendship, and then—— [*Exit.*

SCENE, *the street.*

Enter Carlos, with three ruffians.

Car. A younger brother ! I was one too long,
Not to prevent my being so again.
We must be sudden. Younger brothers are
But lawful bastards of another name,
Thrust out of their nobility of birth
And family, and tainted into trades.
Shall I be one of them—Bow, and retire,
To make more room for the unwieldy heir
To play the fool in ! No——
But how shall I prevent it ?—Biron comes
To take possession of my father's love——
Would that were all ; there is a birth-right too
That he will seize. Besides, if Biron lives,
He will unfold some practices, which I
Cannot well answer—therefore he shall die ;
This night must be dispos'd of : I have means
That will not fail my purpose. Here he comes.

Enter Biron.

Bir. Ha ! am I beset ? I live but to revenge me.

[*They surround him, fighting ; Villeroy enters with two servants ; they rescue him ; Carlos and his party fly.*

Vil. How are you, Sir ? Mortally hurt, I fear.
Take care, and lead him in.

Bir. I thank you for the goodness, Sir ; tho' 'tis
Bestow'd upon a very wretch ; and death,
Tho' from a villain's hand, had been to me
An act of kindness, and the height of mercy——
But I thank you, Sir. [*He is led in.*

SCENE, *the inside of the house.*

Enter Isabella.

Isa. Murder my husband ! Oh ! I must not dare
To think of living on ; my desperate hand

In a mad rage may offer it again :
 Stab any where but there. Here's room enough
 In my own breast, to act the fury in,
 The proper scene of mischief. ' Villeroy comes ;
 ' Villeroy and Biron come ! Oh ! hide me from 'em —
 ' They rack, they tear ; let 'em carve out my limbs,
 ' Divide my body to their equal claims !
 ' My soul is only Biron's ; that is free,
 ' And thus I strike for him, and liberty.'

[*Going to stab herself, Villeroy runs in, and prevents her, by taking the dagger from her.*

Vil. Angels defend and save thee !

Attempt thy precious life ! ' the treasury
 ' Of nature's sweets ! life of my little world !'
 Lay violent hands upon thy innocent self !

Isa. Swear I am innocent, and I'll believe you.
 What would you have with me ? Pray let me go.

' —Are you there, Sir ? You are the very man
 ' Have done all this—You would have made
 ' Me believe you married me ; but the fool
 ' Was wiser, I thank you : 'tis not all gospel
 ' You men preach upon that subject.'

Vil. Dost thou not know me, love ?

' *Isa* O yes : very well. [Staring on him.]

' You are the widow's comforter ; that marries
 ' Any woman when her husband's out of the way :
 ' But I'll never, never take your word again.

' *Vil.* I am thy loving husband.'

'Tis Villeroy, thy husband.

Isa. I have none ; no husband — [Weeping.]
 Never had but one, and he dy'd at Candy,
 ' Did he not ? I'm sure you told me so ; you,
 ' Or somebody, with just such a lying look,
 ' As you have now.' Speak, did he not die there ?

Vil. He did, my life.

Isa. But swear it, quickly swear,

Biron enters bloody, and leaning upon his sword.

Before that screaming evidence appears,
 In bloody proof against me——

[*She seeing Biron, swoons into a chair ; Vil. helps her.*

Vil. Help there ! Nurse, where are you ?

Ha !

Ha ! I am distracted too ! [*Going to call for help, sees Bir. Biron alive !*]

Bir. The only wretch on earth that must not live.

Vil. Biron or Villeroy must not, that's decreed.

Bir. You've sav'd me from the hands of murderers :
Would you had not, for life's my greatest plague—
And then, of all the world, you are the man

I would not be obliged to——Isabella !

I came to fall before thee : I had dy'd

Happy, not to have found your Villeroy here :

A long farewell, and a last parting kiss. [*Kisses her.*]

Vil. A kiss ! confusion ! it must be your last. [*Draws.*]

Bir. I know it must—Here I give up that death

You but delay'd : Since what is past has been

The work of fate, thus we must finish it.

Thrust home, be sure.

[*Faints.*]

Vil. Alas ! he faints ! some help there.

Bir. 'Tis all in vain, my sorrows soon will end—

Oh, Villeroy ! let a dying wretch intreat you,

To take this letter to my father. My Isabella !

Couldst thou but hear me, my last words should bless thee.

I cannot tho' in death, bequeath her to thee. [*To Vil.*]

But could I hope my boy, my little one,

Might find a father in thee—Oh, I faint—

I can no more—Hear me, heav'n ! Oh, support

My wife, my Isabella—Bless my child !

And take a poor unhappy——

[*Dies.*]

Vil. He's gone—Let what will be the consequence,

I'll give it him. I have involv'd myself,

And would be clear'd ; that must be thought on now.

My care of her is lost in wild amaze. [*Going to Isa.*]

'Are you all dead within there ? Where, where are you ?'

Good nurse, take care of her ; I'll bring more help. [*Exit.*]

Isabella comes to herself.

Isa. Where have I been ?—Methinks I stand upon

The brink of life, ready to shoot the gulph

That lies between me and the realms of rest :

But still detain'd, I cannot pass the strait ;

Deny'd to live, and yet I must not die :

Doom'd to come back, like a complaining ghost,

To my unbury'd body——Here it lies——

[*Throws herself by Biron's body.*]

My body, soul, and life. A little dust,

To

To cover our cold limbs in the dark grave——
There, there we shall sleep safe and sound together.

Enter Villeroy with servants.

Vil. Poor wretch ; upon the ground ! She's not herself :
Remove her from the body. [*Servants going to raise her.*]

Isa. Never, never——

You have divorc'd us once, but shall no more——
Help, help me, Biron ?—Ha !—bloody and dead !
Oh, murder ! murder ! You have done this deed——
Vengeance and murder ! bury us together——
Do any thing but part us.

Vil. Gently, gently raise her.
She must be forc'd away.

[*She drags the body after her ; they get her into their arms, and carry her off.*]

Isa. Oh, they tear me ! Cut off my hands——
Let me leave something with him——

They'll clasp him fast——

Oh, cruel, cruel men !

This you must answer one day.

Vil. Good nurse, take care of her. [*Nurse follows her.*]
Send for all helps : all, all that I am worth,
Shall cheaply buy her peace of mind again.

' Be sure you do, [*To a servant,*

' Just as I order'd you.' The storm grows loud——

[*Knocking at the door.*]

I am prepar'd for it. Now let them in.

Enter Count Baldwin, Carlos, Belford, friends, with servants.

C. Bald. Oh, do I live to this unhappy day !
Where is my wretched son ?

Car. Where is my brother ?

[*They see him, and gather about the body.*]

Vil. I hope in heav'n.

Car. Canst thou pity him !

Wish him in heav'n ! when thou hast done a deed,
That must for ever cut thee from the hopes
Of ever coming there.

Vil. I do not blame you——
You have a brother's right to be concern'd
For his untimely death.

Car.

Car. Untimely death, indeed !

Vil. But yet you must not say, I was the cause.

Car. Not you the cause ! Why, who should murder him ?

We do not ask you to accuse yourself,
But I must say, that you have murder'd him ;
And will say nothing else, till justice draws
Upon our side, at the loud call of blood,
To execute so foul a murderer.

Bel. Poor Biron ! Is this thy welcome home !

Friend. Rise, Sir ; there is a comfort in revenge,
Which yet is left you. [To C. Bald.]

Car. Take the body hence. [Biron carry'd off.]

C. Bald. What could provoke you ?

Vil. Nothing could provoke me
To a base murder, which, I find, you think
Me guilty of. I know my innocence ;
My servants too can witness that I drew
My sword in his defence, to rescue him.

Bel. Let the servants be call'd.

Fr. Let's hear what they can say.

Car. What they can say ! Why, what should servants
say ?

They're his accomplices, his instruments,
And will not charge themselves. If they could do
A murder for his service, they can lie,
Lie nimbly, and swear hard, to bring him off.
You say you drew your sword in his defence :
Who were his enemies ? Did he need defence ?
Had he wrong'd any one ? Could he have cause
To apprehend a danger, but from you ?
And yet you rescu'd him !—No, no, he came
Unseasonably, (that was all his crime)
Unluckily to interrupt your sport :
You were new marry'd—marry'd to his wife ;
And therefore you, and she, and all of you,
(For all of you I must believe concern'd)
Combin'd to murder him out of the way.

Bel. If it be so——

Car. It can be only so.

Fr. Indeed it has a face——

Car. As black as hell.

C. Bald. The law will do me justice: send for the
magistrate.

Car. I'll go myself for him—— [Exit.

Vil. These strong presumptions, I must own, indeed,
Are violent against me; but I have
A witness, and on this side hear'n too.

—— Open that door.

*Door opens and Pedro is brought forward by Villeroy's ser-
vants.*

Here's one can tell you all.

Ped. All, all; save me but from the rack, I'll confess
all.

Vil. You and your accomplices design'd
To murder Biron?—— Speak.

Ped. We did.

Vil. Did you engage upon your private wrongs,
Or were employ'd?

Ped. He never did us wrong.

Vil. You were set on then.

Ped. We were set on.

Vil. What do you know of me?

Ped. Nothing, nothing:

You sav'd his life, and have discover'd me.

Vil. He has acquitted me.

If you would be resolv'd of any thing,
He stands upon his answer.

Bel. Who set you on to act this horrid deed?

C. Bald. I'll know the villain; give me quick his name,
Or I will tear it from thy bleeding heart.

Ped. I will confess.

C. Bald. Do then.

Ped. It was my master, Carlos, your own son.

C. Bald. Oh, monstrous! monstrous! most unnatural!

Bel. Did he employ you to murder his own brother?

Ped. He did; and he was with us when 'twas done.

C. Bald. If this be true, this horrid, horrid tale,
It is but just upon me: Biron's wrongs
Must be reveng'd; and I the cause of all.

Fr. What will you do with him?

C. Bald. Take him a-part——

I know too much.

[Pedro goes in.

Vil. I had forgot—Your wretched, dying son

Gave

Gave me this letter for you. [*Gives it to Baldwin.*
 I dare deliver it. If it speaks of me,
 I pray to have it read.

C. Bald. You know the hand.

Bel. I know 'tis Biron's hand.

C. Bald. Pray read it. [*Bellford reads the letter.*

“ S I R,

“ I find I am come only to lay my death at your door.
 I am now going out of the world; but cannot forgive
 you, nor my brother Carlos, for not hindering my poor
 wife Ifabella, from marrying with Villeroy; when you
 both knew, from so many letters, that I was alive.—

BIRON.”

Vil. How!—Did you know it then?

C. Bald. Amazement, all!

Enter Carlos, with Officers.

Oh, Carlos! are you come? Your brother here,
 Here, in a wretched letter, lays his death
 To you and me—Have you done any thing
 To hasten his sad end!

Car. Bless me, Sir, I do any thing! Who, I?

C. Bald. He talks of letters that were sent to us.
 I never heard of any—Did you know
 He was alive?

Car. Alive! Heav'n knows, not I.

C. Bald. Had you no news of him, from a report,
 Or letter, never?

Car. Never, never, I.

Bel. That's strange, indeed: I know he often writ
 To lay before you the condition [*To C. Baldwin.*
 Of his hard slavery: and more, I know,
 That he had several answers to his letters.
 He said, they came from you; you are his brother.

Car. Never from me.

Bel. That will appear.

The letters, I believe, are still about him;
 For some of 'em I saw but yesterday.

C. Bald. What did those answers say?

Bel. I cannot speak to the particulars;
 But I remember well, the sum of 'em
 Was much the same, and all agreed,
 That there was nothing to be hop'd from you;

That 'twas your barbarous resolution
To let him perish there. —

C. Bald. Oh, Carlos! Carlos! hadst thou been a brother —

Car. This is a plot upon me. I never knew
He was in slavery, or was alive;
Or heard of him, before this fatal hour.

Bel. There, Sir, I must confront you.
He sent you a letter, to my knowledge, last night;
And you sent him word you would come to him —
I fear you came too soon.

C. Bald. 'Tis all too plain. —

Bring out that wretch before him. [*Pedro produced.*]

Car. Ha! Pedro there! — Then I am caught, indeed.

Bel. You start at sight of him;
He has confess'd the bloody deed.

Car. Well then, he has confess'd,
And I must answer it.

Bel. Is there no more?

Car. Why! — what would you have more? I know
And I expect it. [the worst,

C. Bald. Why hast thou done all this?

Car. Why, that which damns most men, has ruin'd
The making of my fortune. Biron stood [me;
Between me and your favour: while he liv'd,
I had not that; hardly was thought a son,
And not at all a-kin to your estate.
I could not bear a younger brother's lot,
To live depending upon courtesy —
Had you provided for me like a father,
I had been still a brother.

C. Bald. 'Tis too true;

I never lov'd thee, as I should have done:
It was my sin, and I am punish'd for't.
Oh! never may distinction rise again
In families: let parents be the same
To all their children; common in their care,
And in their love of 'em — I am unhappy,
For loving one too well.

Vil. You knew your brother liv'd; why did you take
Such pains to marry me to Isabella?

Car. I had my reason's for't —

Vil. More than I thought you had.

Car. But one was this—

I knew my brother lov'd his wife so well,
That if ever he should come home again,
He cou'd not long out-live the loss of her.

Bel. If you rely'd on that, why did you kill him ?

Car. To make all sure. Now, you are answer'd all.

Where must I go ? I am tir'd of you questions.

C. Bald. I leave the judge to tell thee what thou art ;
A father cannot find a name for thee.

But parricide is highest treason, sure,
To sacred nature's law ; and must be so,
So sentenc'd in thy crimes. Take him away—

The violent remedy is found at last,
That drives thee out, thou poison of my blood,
Infect'd long, and only foul in thee. [*Carlos led off.*]

Grant me, sweet Heav'n ! thy patience to go thro'

The torment of my cure—Here, here begins

The operation—Alas ! she's mad.

*Enter Isabella distracted, held by her women; her hair
disturb'd; her little son running in before, being afraid
of her.*

Vil. My Isabella ! poor unhappy wretch !

What can I say to her ?

Isa. Nothing, nothing ; 'tis a babbling world—

'll hear no more on't. When does the court sit ?

I'll not be bought—What ! to sell innocent blood !—

You look like one of the pale judges here ;

Minos, or Radamanth, or Æacus—

have heard of you.

I have a cause to try, an honest one ;

Will you not hear it ? Then I must appeal

To the bright throne—Call down the heav'nly powers

To witness how you use me.

Wom. Help, help, we cannot hold her.

Vil. You but enrage her more.'

C. Bald. Pray give her way ; she'll hurt nobody.

Isa. What have you done with him ? He was here but
saw him here. Oh, Biron, Biron ! where, [now ;

Where have they hid thee from me ? He is gone—

but here's a little flaming cherubim—

Child. Oh, save me, save me ! [*Running to Bald.*]

Isa. The Mercury of Heav'n, with silver wings,
Impt for the flight, to overtake his ghost,
And bring him back again.

Child. I fear she'll kill me.

C. Bald. She will not hurt thee. [*She flings away.*]

Isa. Will nothing do? I did not hope to find
Justice on earth; 'tis not in Heav'n neither.

Biron has watch'd his opportunity-----

Softly; he steals it from the sleeping gods,

And sends it thus-----

[*Stabs herself.*]

Now, now I laugh at you, defy you all,

You tyrant-murderers.

Vil. Call, call for help---Oh, Heav'n! this was too
much,

C. Bald. Oh, thou most injur'd innocence! Yet live,
Live but to witness for me to the world,

How much I do repent me of the wrongs,

Th' unnatural wrongs, which I have heap'd on thee,

And have pull'd down this judgment on us all.

Vil. Oh, speak, speak but a word of comfort to me.

C. Bald. If the most tender father's care and love
Of thee, and thy poor child, can make amends---

Oh, yet look up and live.

Isa. Where is that little wretch?

[*They raise her.*]

I die in peace, to leave him to your care.

I have a wretched mother's legacy,

A dying kiss---pray let me give it him,

My blessing; that, that's all I have to leave thee.

Oh, may thy father's virtues live in thee,

And all his wrongs be buried in my grave.

[*Dies.*]

Vil. She's gone, and all my joys of life with her.

' Where are your officers of justice now?

' Seize, bind me, drag me to the bloody bar.

' Accuse, condemn me; let the sentence reach

' My hated life-----No matter how it comes;

' I'll think it just, and thank you as it falls.

' Self-murder is deny'd me; else, how soon

' Could I be past the pain of my remembrance!

' But I must live, grow grey with ling'ring grief,

' To die at last in telling this sad tale.'

C. Bald. Poor wretched orphan of most wretched pa-
rents!

'Scaping the storm, thou'rt thrown upon a rock,
' To perish there.' The very rocks would melt,
Soften their nature, sure, to foster thee.

I find it by myself: my flinty heart,
That barren rock, on which thy father starv'd,
Opens it springs of nourishment to thee ;
' There's not a vein but shall run milk for thee.

Oh, had I pardon'd my poor Biron's fault,
His first, his only fault---this had not been.

To erring youth there's some compassion due ;
But while with rigour you their crimes pursue,
What's their misfortune, is a crime for you. }

Hence learn, offending children to forgive :

Leave punishment to Heav'n---'tis Heav'n's preroga-
tive.

END of the FIFTH ACT.

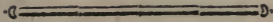


The first part of the book is devoted to a general
 description of the country and its inhabitants.
 The second part contains a detailed account of
 the various tribes and their customs.
 The third part is a collection of
 the most interesting stories and legends
 which have been handed down from
 generation to generation.
 The fourth part is a list of the
 names of the various places and
 persons mentioned in the text.
 The fifth part is a list of the
 names of the various tribes and
 their respective territories.
 The sixth part is a list of the
 names of the various rivers and
 lakes of the country.
 The seventh part is a list of the
 names of the various mountains and
 hills of the country.
 The eighth part is a list of the
 names of the various islands and
 rocks of the country.
 The ninth part is a list of the
 names of the various plants and
 animals of the country.
 The tenth part is a list of the
 names of the various minerals and
 metals of the country.

THE HISTORY OF THE

The history of the country is a very
 interesting one. It is full of
 adventures and exploits. The
 first part of the history is
 devoted to the early days of
 the country. It tells of the
 first settlers and their struggles
 against the elements and the
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BELL'S EDITION.



T H E

DISTRESS MOTHER.

A TRAGEDY, by Mr. AMBROSE PHILIPS.

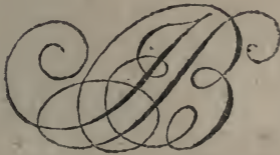
AS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book,

By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,

By Mr. HOPKINS, Prompter.



L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN BELL, near *Exeter-Exchange*, in the *Strand*,
and C. ETHERINGTON, at *York*.

MDCCLXXVI.

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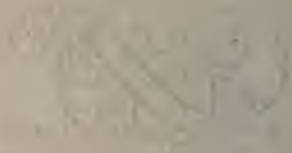
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TO HER GRACE the

D U C H E S S of *Montague.*

MADAM,

THIS tragedy, which I do myself the honour to dedicate to your Grace, is formed upon an original, which passes for the most finished piece, in this kind of writing, that has ever been produced in the French language. The principal action and main distress of the play is of such a nature, as seems more immediately to claim the patronage of a lady: And, when I consider the great and shining characters of antiquity, that are celebrated in it, I am naturally directed to inscribe it to a person, whose illustrious father has, by a long series of glorious actions, (for the service of his country, and in defence of the liberties of Europe,) not only surpassed the generals of his own time, but equalled the greatest heroes of former ages. The name of Hector could not be more terrible among the Greeks, than that of the duke of Marlborough has been to the French.

The refined taste you are known to have in all entertainments for the diversion of the public, and the peculiar life and ornament your presence gives to all assemblies, was no small motive to determine me in the choice of my patroness. The charms that shine out in the person of your Grace, may convince every one, that there is nothing unnatural in the power which is ascribed to the beauty of Andromache.

The strict regard I have had to decency and good-manners throughout this work, is the greatest merit I pretend to plead in favour of my presumption; and is, I am sensible, the only argument that can recommend it most effectually to your protection.

I am,

with the greatest respect,

Madam,

your Grace's most humble,

and most obedient servant,

AMBROSE PHILIPS.

P R E F A C E

IN all the works of genius and invention, whether in verse or prose, there are in general but three manners of style; the one sublime, and full of majesty; the other simple, natural, and easy; and the third, swelling, forced, and unnatural. An injudicious affectation and sublimity is what has betrayed a great many authors into the latter; not considering that real greatness in writing, as well as in manners, consists in an unaffected simplicity. The true sublime does not lie in strained metaphors and the pomp of words, but rises out of noble sentiments and strong images of nature; which will always appear the more conspicuous, when the language does not swell to hide and overshadow them.

These are the considerations that have induced me to write this tragedy in a style very different from what has been usually practised amongst us in poems of this nature. I have had the advantage to copy after a very great master, whose writings are deservedly admired in all parts of Europe, and whose excellencies are too well known to the men of letters in this nation, to stand in need of any farther discovery of them here. If I have been able to keep up to the beauties of Monsieur Racine in my attempts, and to do him no prejudice in the liberties I have taken frequently to vary from so great a poet, I shall have no reason to be dissatisfied with the labour it has cost me to bring the compleatest of his works upon the English stage.

I shall trouble my reader no farther, than to give him some short hints relating to this play, from the preface of the French author. The following lines of Virgil mark out the scene, the action, and the four principal actors in this tragedy, together with their distinct characters; excepting that of Hermione, whose rage and jealousy is sufficiently painted in the *Andromache* of Euripides.

*Littoraque Epiri legimus, portuque subimus
 Chaonio, et celsam Buthroti ascendimus urbem—
 Solemnes cum forte dapes, et tristia dona
 Libabat cineri Andromache, manesque vocabat
 Hectoreum ad tumulum, viridi quem cespite inanem,
 Et geminas, causam lacrimis, sacra-verat aras---
 Defecit vultum, et demissa voce locuta est :
 O felix una ante alias Priameia virgo,
 Hostilem ad tumulum, Trojæ sub mænibus altis
 Justa mori ! quæ sortitus non pertulit ullos,
 Nec victoris heri tetigit captiva cubile.
 Nos patria incensa, diversa per æquora vectæ,
 Stirpis Achilleæ fastus, juvenumque superbum,
 Servitio enixæ tulimus, qui deinde secutus
 Ladæam Hermionen, Lacedæmoniosque hymenæos—
 Ast illum ereptæ magno inflammatus amore
 Conjugis, et scelerum furiis agitatus Orestes
 Excipit incautum patriasque obtruncat ad aras.*

VIRG. ÆN. Lib. iii.

The great concern of Andromache, in the Greek poet, is for the life of Molossus, a son she had by Pyrrhus. But it is more conformable to the general notion we form of that princess, at this great distance of time, to represent her as the disconsolate widow of Hector, and to suppose her the mother only of Astyanax. Considered in this light, no doubt, she moves our compassion much more effectually, than she could be imagined to do in any distress for a son by a second husband.

In order to bring about this beautiful incident, so necessary to heighten in Andromache the character of a tender mother, an affectionate wife, and a widow full of veneration for the memory of her deceased husband, the life of Astyanax is indeed a little prolonged beyond the term fixed to it by the general consent of the ancient authors. But so long as there is nothing improbable in the supposition, a judicious critic will always be pleased when he finds a matter of fact (especially so far removed in the dark and fabulous ages) falsified, for the embellishment of a whole poem.

P R O.

PROLOGUE, written by Mr. STEELE.

SINCE fancy by itself is loose and vain,
The wise, by rules, that airy power restrain:
They think those writers mad, who at their ease
Convey this house and audience where they please:
Who Nature's stated distances confound,
And make this spot all soils the sun goes round:
'Tis nothing, when a fancy'd scene's in view,
To skip from Covent-Garden to Peru.

But Shakespeare's self transgress'd; and shall each elf,
Each pigmy genius, quote great Shakespeare's self!
What critic dares prescribe what's just and fit,
Or mark out limits for such boundless wit!
Shakespeare could travel thro' earth, sea, and air,
And paint out all the powers and wonders there.
In barren desarts he makes Nature smile,
And gives us feasts in his Enchanted Isle.
Our author does his feeble force confess,
Nor dares pretend such merit to transgress;
Does not such shining gifts of genius share,
And therefore makes propriety his care.
Your treat with studied decency he serves;
Not only rules of time and place preserves,
But strives to keep his character intire,
With French correctness, and with British fire.

This piece, presented in a foreign tongue,
When France was glorious, and her monarch young,
An hundred times a crowded audience drew,
An hundred times repeated, still 'twas new.

Pyrrhus provok'd, to no wild rants betray'd,
Resents his generous love so ill repay'd;
Does like a man resent, a prince upbraid.
His sentiments disclose a royal mind,
Nor is he known a king from guards behind.

Injur'd Hermione demands relief;
But not from heavy narratives of grief:
In conscious majesty her pride is shewn;
Born to avenge her wrongs, but not bemoan.

Andromache—If in our author's lines,
As in the great original she shines,
Nothing but from barbarity she fears;
Attend with silence, you'll applaud with tears.

 DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

	Covent-garden.	Drury-lane.
Pyrrhus, son of <i>Achilles</i> - - -	Mr. Aickin.	Mr. Palmer.
Phœnix, counsellor <i>to Pyrrhus</i> - -	Mr. L'Estrange.	Mr. Usher.
Orestes, son of <i>Agamemnon</i> - -	Mr. Barry.	Mr. Smith.
Pylades, friend to <i>Orestes</i> - - -	Mr. Clinch.	Mr. Packer.

W O M E N.

Andromache, <i> Hector's widow</i>	Mrs. Hartley.	Mrs. Yates.
Cephisa, confidante <i>to Andromache</i>	Miss Dayes.	Mrs. Johnston.
Hermione, daugh- <i>ter to Menelaus</i>	Mrs. Barry.	Miss Younge.
Cleone, confidante <i>to Hermione</i> - -	Miss Pearce.	Miss Platt.

Attendants on Pyrrhus and Orestes, &c.

The SCENE, a great hall in the court of Pyrrhus,
at Buthrotos, the capital city of Epirus.

T H E

DISTREST MOTHER.

A C T I.

SCENE, *the Palace of Pyrrhus.**Enter Orestes, Pylades, and attendants.*

ORESTES.

O Pylades ! what's life without a friend !
 At sight of thee my gloomy soul cheers up ;
 My hopes revive, and gladness dawns within me.
 After an absence of six tedious moons,
 How could I hope to find my Pylades,
 My joy, my comfort, on this fatal shore ?
 Even the court of Pyrrhus ? in these realms,
 These hated realms, so cross to all my wishes.
 Oh, my brave friend ! may no blind stroke of fate
 Divide us more, and tear me from myself.

Pyl. O prince ! O my Orestes ! O my friend !—
 Thus let me speak the welcome of my heart.

[*Embracing.*

Since I have gain'd this unexpected meeting,
 Blest be the powers who barr'd my way to Greece,
 And kept me here ! ever since the unhappy day
 When warring winds (Epirus full in view)
 Sunder'd our barks on the loud, stormy main.

Orest. It was, indeed, a morning full of horror !

Pyl.

Pyl. A thousand boding cares have rack'd my soul
 In your behalf. Often, with tears, I mourn'd
 The fatal ills, in which your life's involv'd ;
 And grudg'd you dangers which I could not share.
 I fear'd to what extremities the black despair
 That prey'd upon your mind, might have betray'd
 And left the gods, in pity to your woes, [you,
 Should hear your pray'rs, and take the life you
 loath'd,

But now with joy I see you !—The retinue,
 And numerous followers that surround you here,
 Speak better fortunes, and a mind dispos'd
 To relish life.

Orest. Alas ! my friend, who knows
 The destiny to which I stand reserv'd !
 I come in search of an inhuman fair ;
 And live or die, as she decrees my fate.

Pyl. You much surprize me, prince !—I thought
 you cur'd
 Of your unpity'd, unsuccessful passion.
 Why, in Epirus, should you hope to find
 Hermione less cruel, than at Sparta ?
 I thought her pride, and the disdainful manner
 In which she treated all your constant sufferings,
 Had broke your fetters, and assur'd your freedom :
 Asham'd of your repulse, and slighted vows,
 You hated her ; you talk'd of her no more :
 Prince, you deceiv'd me.

Orest. I deceiv'd myself.
 Do not upbraid the unhappy man, that loves thee.
 Thou know'st, I never hid my passion from thee ;
 Thou saw'st it in its birth, and in its progress :
 And when at last the hoary king, her father,
 Great Menelaus, gave away his daughter,
 His lovely daughter, to the happy Pyrrhus,
 Th'avenger of his wrongs ; thou saw'st my grief,
 My torture, my despair ; ' and how I dragg'd,
 ' From sea to sea, a heavy chain of woes.
 O Pylades ! my heart has bled within me,
 To see thee, prest with sorrows not thy own,
 Still wand'ring with me, like a banish'd man !

Watchful, and anxious for thy wretched friend,
To temper the wild transports of my mind,
And save me from myself.

Pyl. Why thus unkind?

Why will you envy me the pleasing task
Of generous love, and sympathizing friendship?

Orest. Thou miracle of truth—but hear me on.
When in the midst of my disastrous fate,
I thought how the divine Hermione,
Deaf to my vows, regardless of my plaints,
Gave up herself, in all her charms, to Pyrrhus;
Thou may'st remember, I abhor'd her name,
Strove to forget her, and repay her scorn.
I made my friends, and even myself, believe
My soul was freed. Alas! I did not see,
That all the malice of my heart was love.
Triumphing thus, and yet a captive still,
In Greece I landed: and in Greece I found
The assembled princes all alarm'd with fears,
In which their common safety seem'd concern'd.
I join'd them: For I hop'd that war and glory
Might fill my mind, and take up all my thoughts:
And, that my shatter'd soul, impair'd with grief,
Once more would reassume its wonted vigour,
And ev'ry idle passion quit my breast.

Pyl. The thought was worthy Agamemnon's son.

Orest. But see the strange perverseness of my stars,
Which throws me on the rock I strove to shun!
The jealous chiefs, and all the states of Greece,
With one united voice complain of Pyrrhus;
That now, forgetful of the promise giv'n,
And mindless of his godlike father's fate,
Astyanax he nurses in his court;
Astyanax, the young, surviving hope
Of ruin'd Troy; Astyanax, descended
From a long race of kings; great Hector's son.

Pyl. A name still dreadful in the ears of Greece!
But, prince, you'll cease to wonder why the child
Lives thus protected in the court of Pyrrhus,
When you shall hear, the bright Andromache,

His lovely captive, charms him from his purpose :
The mother's beauty guards the helpless son.

Orest. Your tale confirms what I have heard ; and
hence

Spring all my hopes. Since my proud rival woos
Another partner to his throne and bed,
Hermione may still be mine. Her father,
The injur'd Menelaus, thinks already
His daughter slighted, and th' intended nuptials
Too long delay'd. I heard his loud complaints
With secret pleasure ; and was glad to find
Th' ungrateful maid neglected in her turn,
And all my wrongs aveng'd in her disgrace.

Pyl. Oh, may you keep your just resentments
warm !

Orest. Resentments ! Oh, my friend, too soon I
found

They grew not out of hatred ! I am betray'd :
I practise on myself ; and fondly plot
My own undoing. Goaded on by love,
I canvass'd all the suffrages of Greece ;
And here I come their sworn ambassador,
To speak their jealousies, and claim this boy.

Pyl. Pyrrhus will treat your embassy with scorn.
Full of Achilles, his redoubted fire,
Pyrrhus is proud, impetuous, headstrong, fierce ;
Made up of passions : Will he then be sway'd,
And give to death the son of her he loves ?

Orest. Oh, would he render up Hermione,
And keep Astyanax, I should be blest !
He must ; he shall. Hermione is my life,
My soul, my rapture !—I'll no longer curb
The strong desire, that hurries me to madness :
I'll give a loose to love ; I'll bear her hence ;
I'll tear her from his arms ; I'll—O, ye gods !
Give me Hermione, or let me die !——
But tell me, Pylades ; how stand my hopes ?
Is Pyrrhus still enamour'd with her charms ?
Or dost thou think he'll yield me up the prize,
The dear, dear prize, which he has ravish'd from me ?

Pyl.

Pyl. I dare not flatter your fond hopes so far ;
 The king, indeed, cold to the Spartan Princess,
 Turns all his passion to Andromache,
 Hector's afflicted widow. But in vain,
 With interwoven love and rage, he sues
 The charming captive, obstinately cruel.
 Oft he alarms her for her child confin'd
 Apart ; and, when her tears begin to flow,
 As soon he stops them, and recalls his threats.
 Hermione a thousand times has seen
 His ill-requited vows return to her ;
 And takes his indignation all for love.
 What can be gather'd from a man so various ?
 He may, in the disorder of his soul,
 Wed her he hates ; and punish her he loves.

Orest. But tell me how the wrong'd Hermione
 Brooks her slow nuptials, and dishonour'd charms ?

Pyl. Hermione would fain be thought to scorn
 Her wavering lover, and disdain his falshood ;
 But, spite of all her pride and conscious beauty,
 She mourns in secret her neglected charms ;
 And oft has made me privy to her tears :
 Still threatens to be gone ; yet still she stays ;
 And sometimes sighs, and wishes for Orestes.

Orest. Ah, were those wishes from her heart, my
 friend,

I'd fly in transport— [Flourish within.

Pyl. Hear !—the king approaches
 To give you audience. Speak your embassy
 Without reserve : urge the demands of Greece ;
 And, in the name of all her kings, require,
 That Hector's son be given into your hands.
 Pyrrhus, instead of granting what they ask,
 To speed his love, and win the Trojan dame,
 Will make it merit to preserve her son.
 But, see ; he comes.

Orest. Mean while, my Pylades,
 Go, and dispose Hermione to see
 Her lover, who is come thus far, to throw
 Himself, in all his sorrows, at her feet.

Enter Pyrrhus, Phœnix, and attendants.

Orest. Before I speak the message of the Greeks,
Permit me, Sir, to glory in the title
Of their ambassador; since I behold
Troy's vanquisher, and great Achilles' son.
Nor does the son rise short of such a father:
If Hector fell by him, Troy fell by you.
But, what your father never would have done,
You do. You cherish the remains of Troy;
And, by an ill-tim'd pity, keep alive
The dying embers of a ten-years war.
Have you so soon forgot the mighty Hector?
The Greeks remember his high brandish'd sword,
That fill'd their states with widows and with orphans;
For which they call for vengeance on his son.
Who knows what he may one day prove? Who knows
But he may brave us in our ports; and, fill'd
With Hector's fury, set our fleets on blaze.
You may, yourself, live to repent your mercy.
Comply, then, with the Grecians just demands:
Sate their vengeance, and preserve yourself.

Pyrr. The Greeks are for my safety more concern'd
Than I desire. I thought your kings were met
On more important counsel. When I heard
The name of their ambassador, I hop'd
Some glorious enterprize was taking birth.
Is Agamemnon's son dispatched for this?
And do the Grecian chiefs, renown'd in war,
A race of heroes, join in close debate,
To plot an infant's death?—What right has Greece
To ask his life? Must I, must I alone,
Of all her scepter'd warriors, be deny'd
To treat my captive as I please? Know, prince,
When Troy lay smoking on the ground, and each
Proud victor shar'd the harvest of the war,
Andromache and this her son were mine;
Were mine by lot; and who shall wrest them from me
Ulysses bore away old Priam's queen;
Cassandra was your own great father's prize;

Did I concern myself in what they won?
 Did I send embassies to claim their captives?

Orest. But, Sir, we fear for you, and for ourselves.
 Troy may again revive, and a new Hector
 Rise in Astyanax. Then think betimes—

Pyr. Let dastard souls be timorously wise:
 But tell them, Pyrrhus knows not how to form
 Far-fancy'd ills, and dangers out of fight.

Orest. Sir, call to mind the unrival'd strength of
 Troy;

Her walls, her bulwarks, and her gates of brass;
 Her kings, her heroes, and embattled armies!

Pyr. I call them all to mind; and see them all
 Confus'd in dust; all mixt in one wide ruin;
 All but a child, and he in bondage held.
 What vengeance can we fear from such a Troy?
 If they have sworn to extinguish Hector's race,
 Why was their vow for twelve long months defer'd?
 Why was he not in Priam's bosom slain?
 He should have fall'n among the slaughter'd heaps,
 Whelm'd under Troy. His death had then been just,
 ' When age and infancy, alike in vain,
 ' Pledg'd their weakneſs; when the heat of conquest,
 ' And horrors of the fight, rouz'd all our rage,
 ' And blindly hurry'd us, thro' scenes of death.

My fury then was without bounds: but now,
 My wrath appeas'd, must I be cruel still?
 And, deaf to all the tender calls of pity,
 Like a cool murderer, bathe my hands in blood;
 An infant's blood?—No, prince—Go, bid the Greeks
 Mark out some other victim; my revenge
 Has had its fill. What has escap'd from Troy
 Shall not be sav'd to perish in Epirus.

Orest. I need not tell you, Sir, Astyanax
 Was doom'd to death in Troy; nor mention how
 The crafty mother sav'd her darling son:
 The Greeks do now but urge their former sentence;
 Nor is't the boy, but Hector, they pursue;
 The father draws their vengeance on the son:

The father, who so oft in Grecian blood
Has drench'd his sword: the father, whom the Greeks
May seek even here.—Prevent them, Sir, in time.

Pyr. No! let them come; since I was born to wage
Eternal wars. Let them now turn their arms
On him, who conquer'd for them: let them come,
And in Epirus seek another Troy.

'Twas thus they recompens'd my godlike fire;
Thus was Achilles thank'd. But, prince, remember,
Their black ingratitude then cost them dear.

Orest. Shall Greece then find a rebel son in Pyrrhus?

Pyr. Have I then conquer'd to depend on Greece?

Orest. Hermione will sway your soul to peace,
And mediate 'twixt her father and yourself:
Her beauty will enforce my embassy.

Pyr. Hermione may have her charms; and I
May love her still, tho' not her father's slave.
I may in time give proofs, that I'm a lover;
But never must forget, that I'm a king.
Meanwhile, Sir, you may see fair Hellen's daughter:
I know how near in blood you stand ally'd.

That done, you have my answer, prince. The Greeks,
No doubt, expect your quick return. [*Ex. Orest. &c.*]

Phœn. Sir, do you send your rival to the princess?

Pyr. I am told, that he has lov'd her long.

Phœn. If so,

Have you not cause to fear the smother'd flame
May kindle at her sight, and blaze a-new?
And she be brought to listen to his passion.

Pyr. Ay, let them, Phœnix, let them love their
fill!

Let them go hence; let them depart together:
Together let them sail for Sparta: all my ports
Are open to them both. From what constraint,
What irksome thoughts, should I be then reliev'd!

Phœn. But, Sir——

Pyr. I shall another time, good Phœnix,
Unbosom to thee all my thoughts—for, see,
Andromache appears.

Enter

Enter Andromache, and Cephisa.

Pyr. May I, Madam,
Flatter my hopes so far, as to believe
You come to seek me here?

And. 'This way, Sir, leads
To those apartments where you guard my son.
Since you permit me, once a day, to visit
All I have left of Hector and of Troy,
I go to weep a few sad moments with him.
I have not yet, to-day, embrac'd my child;
I have not held him in my widow'd arms. [prevail,

Pyr. Ah, Madam! should the threats of Greece
You'll have occasion for your tears, indeed!

Andr. Alas, what threats! What can alarm the
There are no Trojans left! Greeks?

Pyr. Their hate to Hector
Can never die: the terror of his name
Still shakes their souls; and makes them dread his son.

Andr. A mighty honour for victorious Greece,
To fear an infant, a poor friendless child!
Who smiles in bondage; nor yet knows himself
The son of Hector, and the slave of Pyrrhus.

Pyr. Weak as he is, the Greeks demand his life?
And send no less than Agamemnon's son,
To fetch him hence.

Andr. And, Sir, do you comply
With such demands!—This blow is aim'd at me:
How should the child avenge his slaughter'd sire?
But, cruel men! they will not have him live
To cheer my heavy heart, and ease my bonds.
I promis'd to myself in him a son,
In him a friend, a husband, and a father.
But I must suffer sorrow heap'd on sorrow;
And still the fatal stroke must come from you.

Pyr. Dry up those tears, I must not see you weep,
And know, I have rejected their demands.
The Greeks already threaten me with war:
But, should they arm, as once they did for Helen,
And hide the Adriatic with their fleets;

Should they prepare a second ten years siege,
 And lay my towers and palaces in dust;
 I am determin'd to defend your son;
 And rather die myself than give him up.
 But, Madam, in the midst of all these dangers,
 Will you refuse me a propitious smile?
 Hated of Greece, and prest on every side,
 Let me not, Madam, while I fight your cause,
 Let me not combat with your cruelties,
 And count Andromache amongst my foes.

Andr. Consider, Sir, how this will sound in Greece!
 How can so great a soul betray such weakness?
 Let not men say, so generous a design
 Was but the transport of a heart in love.

Pyr. Your charms will justify me to the world.

Andr. How can Andromache, a captive queen,
 O'erwhelm'd with grief, a burthen to herself,
 Harbour a thought of love Alas! what charms
 Have these unhappy eyes, by you condemn'd
 To weep for ever?—talk of it no more.
 'To reverence the misfortunes of a foe;
 'To succour the distress, to give the son
 'To an afflicted mother; to repel
 Confederate nations, leagu'd against his life;
 Unbrib'd by love, untterrify'd by threats,
 'To pity, to protect him: these are cares,
 'These are exploits worthy Achilles' son.

Pyr. Will your resentments, then, endure for ever!
 Must Pyrrhus never be forgiven?—'Tis true,
 My sword has often reek'd in Phrygian blood,
 And carried havoc through your royal kindred;
 But you, fair princess, amply have aveng'd
 Old Priam's vanquish'd house: and all the woes
 I brought on them, fall short of what I suffer.
 We both have suffer'd in our turns: and now
 Our common foe should teach us to unite.

Andr. Where does the captive not behold a foe?

Pyr. Forget the term of hatred; and behold
 A friend in Pyrrhus! Give me but to hope,
 I'll free your son; I'll be a father to him:

Myself will teach him to avenge the Trojans.
 I'll go in person to chastise the Greeks,
 Both for your wrongs and mine. Inspir'd by you,
 What would I not atchieve? Again shall Troy
 Rise from its ashes: this right arm shall fix
 Her seat of empire; and your son shall reign.

Andr. Such dreams of greatness suit not my condition:

His hopes of empire perish'd with his father.
 No; thou imperial city, ancient Troy,
 Thou pride of Asia, founded by the gods!
 Never, oh, never must we hope to see
 Those bulwarks rise, which Hector could not guard!
 Sir, all I wish for, is some quiet exile,
 Where, far from Greece remov'd, and far from you,
 I may conceal my son, and mourn my husband.
 Your love creates me envy. Oh, return!
 Return to your betroth'd Hermione.

Pyr. Why do you mock me thus? you know, I cannot.

You know my heart is yours: my soul hangs on you:
 You take up every wish: my waking thoughts,
 And nightly dreams are all employ'd on you.
 'Tis true, Hermione was sent to share
 My throne and bed; and would with transport hear
 The vows which you neglect.

Andr. She has no Troy,
 No Hector to lament: she has not lost
 A husband by your conquests. Such a husband!
 (Tormenting thought!) whose death alone has made
 Your fire immortal: Pyrrhus and Achilles
 Are both grown great by my calamities.

Pyr. Madam, 'tis well! 'Tis very well! I find,
 Your will must be obey'd. Imperious captive,
 It shall. Henceforth I blot you from my mind:
 You teach me to forget your charms; to hate you:
 For know, inhuman beauty, I have lov'd
 Too well to treat you with indifference.
 Think well upon it: my disorder'd soul
 Wavers between th' extreams of love and rage;

I've

I've been too tame ; I will awake to vengeance !
 The son shall answer for the mother's scorn.
 The Greeks demand him : nor will I endanger
 My realms, to pleasure an ungrateful woman.

Andr. Then he must die ! Alas, my son must die !
 He has no friend, no succour left, beside
 His mother's tears, and his own innocence.

Pyr. Go, Madam ; visit this unhappy son.
 The sight of him may bend your stubborn heart ;
 And turn to softness your unjust disdain.
 I shall once more expect your answer. Go,
 And think, while you embrace the captive boy,
 Think that his life depends on your resolves.

[*Ex. Pyrrhus, &c.*

Andr. I'll go ; and in the anguish of my heart,
 Weep o'er my child—If he must die, my life
 Is wrapt in his ; I shall not long survive.
 'Tis for his sake that I have suffer'd life,
 Groan'd in captivity, and out-liv'd Hector.
 Yes, my Astyanax, we'll go together !
 Together to the realms of night we'll go !
 There to thy ravish'd eyes thy fire I'll show,
 And point him out among the shades below.

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

Hermione and Cleone.

HERMIONE.

WELL, I'll be rul'd, Cleone : I will see him ;
 I have told Pylades that he may bring him ;
 But trust me, were I left to my own thoughts,
 I should

I should forbid him yet.

Cleo. And why forbid him?
Is he not, Madam, still the same Orestes?
Orestes, whose return you oft have wish'd?
The man whose sufferings you so oft lamented,
And often prais'd his constancy and love?

Her. That love, that constancy, so ill requited,
Upbraids me to myself! I blush to think
How I have us'd him; and would shun his presence.
What will be my confusion when he sees me
Neglected, and forsaken, like himself?
Will he not say, is this the scornful maid,
The proud Hermione, that tyranniz'd
In Sparta's court, and triumph'd in her charms?
Her insolence at last is well repaid:
I cannot bear the thought!

Cleo. You wrong yourself
With unbecoming fears. He knows too well
Your beauty and your worth. Your lover comes not
To offer insults; but to repeat his vows,
And breathe his ardent passion at your feet.
But, Madam, what's your royal father's will?
What orders do your letters bring from Sparta?

Her. His orders are, if Pyrrhus still delay
The nuptials, and refuse to sacrifice
This Trojan boy, I should with speed embark,
And with their embassy return to Greece.

Cleo. What would you more? Orestes comes in time
To save your honour. Pyrrhus cools apace:
Prevent his falshood, and forsake him first.
I know you hate him; you have told me so.

Her. Hate him! My injur'd honour bids me hate
The ungrateful man, to whom I fondly gave [him.
My virgin heart; the man I lov'd so dearly;
The man I doted on! Oh, my Cleone!
How is it possible I should not hate him!

Cleo. Then give him over, Madam. Quit his court;
And with Orestes—

Her. No! I must have time
To work up all my rage! To meditate

A parting

A parting full of horror! My revenge
Will be but too much quicken'd by the traitor.

Cleo. Do you then wait new insults, new affronts?
To draw you from your father! Then to leave you!
In his own court to leave you—for a captive!
If Pyrrhus can provoke you, he has done it.

Her. Why dost thou heighten my distress? I fear
To search out my own thoughts, and sound my heart.
Be blind to what thou seest: believe me cur'd:
Flatter my weakness; tell me I have conquer'd;
Think that my injur'd soul is set against him;
And do thy best to make me think so too.

Cleo. Why would you loiter here, then?

Her. Let us fly!

Let us begone! I leave him to his captive:
Let him go kneel, and supplicate his slave.
Let us begone!—But what if he repent?
What if the perjur'd prince again submit,
And sue for pardon; What if he renew
His former vows?—But, oh, the faithless man!
He flights me! drives me to extremities!—However,
I'll stay, Cleone, to perplex their loves;
I'll stay, till, by an open breach of contract,
I make him hateful to the Greeks. Already
Their vengeance have I drawn upon the son,
Their second embassy shall claim the mother:
I will redouble all my griefs upon her!

Cleo. Ah, Madam, whither does your rage transport
Andromache, alas! is innocent. [you?
A woman plung'd in sorrow; dead to love:
And when she thinks of Pyrrhus, 'tis with horror.

Her. Would I had done so too!—He had not then
Betray'd my easy faith.—But I, alas!
Discover'd all the fondness of my soul;
I made no secret of my passion to him,
Nor thought it dangerous to be sincere:
My eyes, my tongue, my actions spoke my heart.

Cleo. Well might you speak, without reserve, to
one

Engaged to you by solemn oaths and treaties.

Her. His ardour too was an excuse to mine:

With

With other eyes he saw me then !—Cleone,
 Thou may'st remember, every thing conspir'd
 To favour him : my father's wrongs aveng'd ;
 The Greeks triumphant ; fleets of Trojan spoils ;
 His mighty fire's, his own immortal fame ;
 His eager love ;— all, all conspir'd against me !
 —But I have done : I'll think no more of Pyrrhus.
 Orestes wants not merit ; and he loves me.
 My gratitude, my honour, both plead for him :
 And if I've power o'er my own heart, 'tis his.

Cleo. Madam, he comes—

Her. Alas, I did not think
 He was so near !—I wish I might not see him.

Enter Orestes.

Her. How am I to interpret, Sir, this visit !
 Is it a compliment of form, or love ?

Orest. Madam, you know my weakness. 'Tis my
 To love unply'd : to desire to see you ; [fate
 And still to swear each time shall be the last.
 My passion breaks thro' my repeated oaths :
 And every time I visit you I'm perjurd.
 Even now, I find my wounds all bleed afresh :
 I blush to own it ; but I know no cure.
 I call the gods to witness, I have try'd
 Whatever man could do, (but try'd in vain,)
 To wear you from my mind. Thro' stormy seas,
 And savage climes, in a whole year of absence,
 I courted dangers, and I long'd for death.

Her. Why will you, prince, indulge this mournful
 It ill becomes the ambassador of Greece [tale?
 To talk of dying, and of love. Remember
 The kings you represent : Shall their revenge
 Be disappointed by your ill-tim'd passion ?
 Discharge your embassy : 'tis not Orestes
 The Greeks desire should die.

Orest. My embassy
 Is at an end, for Pyrrhus has refus'd
 To give up Hector's son. Some hidden power
 Protects the boy.

Her. Faithless, ungrateful man! [*Aside.*

Orest. I now prepare for Greece. But e'er I go,
Would hear my final doom pronounc'd by you—
What do I say—I do already hear it!
My doom is fixt: I read it in your eyes.

Her. Will you then still despair? be still suspicious?
What have I done? Wherein have I been cruel?
'Tis true, you find me in the court of Pyrrhus;
But 'twas my royal father sent me hither.
And who can tell, but I have shar'd your griefs?
Have I ne'er wept in secret? Never wish'd
To see Orestes?

Orest. Wish'd to see Orestes!—
Oh joy! Oh ecstasy? My soul's intranc'd?
Oh, charming princess! Oh, transcendent maid!
My utmost wish!—Thus, thus let me express
My boundless thanks!—I never was unhappy—
Am I Orestes?—

Her. You are Orestes,
The same unalter'd, generous, faithful lover:
The prince whom I esteem; whom I lament;
And whom I fain would teach my heart to love!

Orest. Ay, there it is!—I have but your esteem,
While Pyrrhus, has your heart!

Her. Believe me, prince,
Were you as Pyrrhus, I should hate you!

Orest. No!—
I should be blest! I should be lov'd as he is!—
Yet all this while I die by your disdain,
While he neglects your charms, and courts another.

Her. And who has told you, prince, that I'm neglected?
Has Pyrrhus said—(O I shall go distracted!)
Has Pyrrhus told you so?—Or is it you,
Who think thus meanly of me?—Sir, perhaps,
All do not judge like you!—

Orest. Madam, go on!
Insult me still: I'm us'd to bear your scorn.

Her. Why am I told how Pyrrhus loves or hates?
—Go, prince, and arm the Greeks against the rebel;

Let

Let them lay waste his country ; raze his towns ;
 Destroy his fleets ; his palaces ;—himself !—
 Go, prince, and tell me then how much I love him.

Orest. To hasten his destruction, come yourself ;
 And work your royal father to his ruin.

Her. Mean while he weds Andromache !

Orest. Ah, princess !

What is't I hear ?

Her. What infamy for Greece,
 If he should wed a Phrygian, and a captive !

Orest. Is this your hatred, Madam ?—'Tis in vain
 To hide your passion ; every thing betrays it :
 Your looks, your speech, your anger : nay, your
 silence ;

Your love appears in all ; your secret flame
 Breaks out the more, the more you would conceal it.

Her. Your jealousy perverts my meaning still,
 And wrests each circumstance to your disquiet ;
 My very hate is constru'd into fondness.

Orest. Impute my fears, if groundless, to my love.

Her. Then hear me, prince. Obedience to a fa-
 ther

First brought me hither ; and the same obedience
 Detains me here, till Pyrrhus drive me hence,
 Or my offended father shall recall me.

Tell this proud king, that Menelaus scorns
 To match his daughter with a foe of Greece :

Bid him resign Astyanax, or me.

If he persists to guard the hostile boy,

Hermione embarks with you for Sparta.

[*Ex. Her. and Cleone.*

Orestes alone.

Then is Orestes blest ! My griefs are fled !
 Fled like a dream !—Methinks I tread in air !

• Pyrrhus, enamour'd of his captive queen,

• Will thank me, if I take her rival hence :

• He looks not on the princess with my eyes !

• Surprizing happiness !—Unlook'd for joy !

Never let love despair !— the prize is mine !

Be smooth, ye seas; and ye, propitious winds,
 Breathe from Epirus to the Spartan coasts!
 I long to view the sails unfurl'd!—But, see!
 Pyrrhus approaches in an happy hour.

Enter Pyrrhus, and Phœnix.

Pyr. I was in pain to find you, prince. My warm
 Ungovern'd temper would not let me weigh
 The importance of your embassy, and hear
 You argue for my good.—I was to blame.
 I since have pois'd your reasons; and I thank
 My good allies: their care deserves my thanks.
 You have convinc'd me, that the weal of Greece,
 My father's honour, and my own repose,
 Demand that Hector's race should be destroy'd.
 I shall deliver up Astyanax;
 And you, yourself, shall bear the victim hence.

Orest. If you approve it, Sir, and are content
 To spill the blood of a defenceless child;
 The offended Greeks, no doubt, will be pleas'd.

Pyr. Closer to strain the knot of our alliance,
 I have determin'd to espouse Hermione.
 You come in time to grace our nuptial rites:
 In you the kings of Greece will all be present;
 And you have right to personate her father,
 As his ambassador, and brother's son.
 Go, prince, renew your visit; tell Hermione,
 To-morrow I receive her from your hands.

Orest. [*Aside.*] Oh, change of fortune! Oh, undone
 Orestes! [*Ex. Orestes.*]

Pyrrhus and Phœnix.

Pyr. Well, Phœnix! Am I still a slave to love?
 What think'st thou now? Am I myself again?

Phœn. 'Tis as it should be: this discovers Pyrrhus;
 Shews all the hero. Now you are yourself!
 The son, the rival of the great Achilles!
 Greece will applaud you; and the world confess,
 Pyrrhus has conquer'd Troy a second time!

Pyr. Nay, Phœnix, now I but begin to triumph:

I never was a conqueror 'till now!
 Believe me, a whole host, a war of foes,
 May sooner be subdu'd, than love. Oh, Phœnix,
 What ruin have I shunn'd; The Greeks enrag'd,
 Hung o'er me, like a gathering storm, and soon
 Had burst in thunder on my head; while I
 Abandon'd duty, empire, honour, all,
 To please a thankless woman!—One kind look
 Had quite undone me!

Phœn. O, my royal master!

The gods, in favour to you, made her cruel.

Pyr. Thou saw'st with how much scorn she treated
 When I permitted her to see her son, [me!
 I hop'd it might have work'd her to my wishes.

I went to see the mournful interview,
 And found her bath'd in tears, and lost in passion.
 Wild with distress, a thousand times she call'd
 On Hector's name: and when I spoke in comfort,
 And promis'd my protection to her son,
 She kiss'd the boy; and call'd again on Hector:
 'Then strain'd him in her arms; and cry'd, 'Tis he!
 ' 'Tis he himself! his eyes, his every feature!
 ' His very frown, and his stern look already!
 ' 'Tis he: 'Tis my lov'd lord whom I embrace!
 Does she then think, that I preserve the boy.
 To sooth and keep alive her flame for Hector?

Phœn. No doubt, she does; and thinks you favour'd
 But let her go, for an ungrateful woman! [in it;

Pyr. I know the thoughts of her proud, stubborn
 heart:

Vain of her charms, and insolent in beauty,
 She mocks my rage; and when it threatens loudest,
 Expects 'twill soon be humbled into love.
 But we shall change our parts; and she shall find,
 I can be deaf, like her; and steel my heart!
 She's Hector's widow; I Achilles' son!
 Pyrrhus is born to hate Andromache.

Phœn. My royal master, talk of her no more;
 I do not like this anger. Your Hermione

Should now engross your thoughts. 'Tis time to see
her;

'Tis time you should prepare the nuptial rites;
And not rely upon a rival's care:

It may be dangerous.

Pyr. But tell me, Phœnix,
Dost thou not think, the proud Andromache
Will be enrag'd, when I shall wed the princess?

Phœn. Why does Andromache still haunt your
thoughts?

What is't to you, be she enrag'd or pleas'd?
Let her name perish: think of her no more!

Pyr. No, Phœnix!—I have been too gentle with
her,

I've check'd my wrath, and stifled my resentment:
She knows not yet to what degree I hate her.

Let us return:—I'll brave her to her face:
I'll give my anger its free course against her.

Thou shalt see, Phœnix, how I'll break her pride!

Phœn. Oh, go not, Sir!—There's ruin in her eyes!
You do not know your strength: you'll fall before her,
Adore her beauty, and revive her scorn.

Pyr. That were indeed a most unmanly weakness!
Thou dost not know me, Phœnix!

Phœn. Ah, my prince!
You are still struggling in the toils of love.

Pyr. Canst thou then think I love this woman still!
One who repays my passion with disdain!
A stranger, captive, friendless and forlorn;
She and her darling son within my power;
His life a forfeit to the Greeks: Yet I
Preserve her son; would take her to my throne;
Would fight her battles, and avengé her wrongs;
And all this while she treats me as her foe!

Phœn. You have it in your power to be reveng'd.

Pyr. Yes;—and I'll shew my power! I'll give her
To hate me! her Astyanax shall die— [cause
What tears will then be shed! How will she then,
In bitterness of heart, reproach my name!
Then, to compleat her woes, will I espouse

Hermione:—'Twill stab her to the heart!

Phæn. Alas, you threaten like a lover still!

Pyr. Phœnix, excuse this struggle of my soul:
'Tis the last effort of expiring love.

Phæn. Then hasten, Sir, to see the Spartan princess;
And turn the bent of your desires on her.

Pyr. Oh! 'tis a heavy task to conquer love.
And wean the soul from her accustom'd fondness.
But, come:—A long farewell to Hector's widow.
'Tis with a secret pleasure I look back,
And see the many dangers I have pass'd.
The merchant thus, in dreadful tempests tost,
Thrown by the waves on some unlook'd-for coast,
Oft turns, and sees, with a delighted eye,
Midst rocks and shelves the broken billows fly!
And while the outrageous winds the deep deform,
Smiles on the tumult, and enjoys the storm.

[*Exeunt.*

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

Pylades and Orestes.

P Y L A D E S.

FOR Heav'n's sake, Sir, compose your ruffled
And moderate your rage! [mind,

Orest. No, Pylades!

This is no time for counsel.—I am deaf.

Talk not of reason! I have been too patient.

Life is not worth my care. My soul grows desperate.

I'll bear her off, or perish in the attempt.

I'll force her from his arms:—By Heav'n I will!

Pyl. Well, 'tis agreed, my friend:—We'll force

But still consider, we are in Epirus. [her hence,

The court, the guards, Hermione herself,
The very air we breathe, belongs to Pyrrhus.
Good gods! what tempted you to seek her here?

Orest. Lost to myself, I knew not what I did!
My purposes were wild. Perhaps I came
To menace Pyrrhus, and upbraid the woman.

Pyl. This violence of temper may prove fatal.

Orest. It must be more than man to bear these shocks,
These outrages of fate, with temper!

He tells me, that he weds Hermione;
And will to-morrow take her from my hand! —
My hand shall sooner tear the tyrant's heart. —

Pyl. Your passion blinds you, Sir; he's not to blame.
Could you but look into the soul of Pyrrhus,
Perhaps you'd find it tortur'd, like your own.

Orest. No, Pylades! 'Tis all design—His pride,
To triumph over me, has chang'd his love,
The fair Hermione, before I came,
In all her bloom of beauty, was neglected.

Ah, cruel Gods! I thought her all my own!
She was consenting to return to Sparta:

Her heart, divided betwixt rage and love.

Was on the wing to take its leave of Pyrrhus.

She heard my sighs; she pitied my complaints;
She prais'd my constancy;—The least indifference
From this proud king, had made Orestes happy.

Pyl. So your fond heart believes!

‘*Orest.* did I not see

‘ Her hate, her rage, her indignation rise

‘ Against the ungrateful man?

‘ *Pyl.* Believe me, prince,

‘ 'Twas then she lov'd him most! Had Pyrrhus left
her,

‘ She would have form'd some new pretext to stay.

‘ Take my advice:—Think not to force her hence;

But fly yourself from her destructive charms.

Her soul is link'd to Pyrrhus: ‘ were she yours,

‘ She would reproach you still, and still regret

‘ Her disappointed nuptials.——’

Orest. Talk no more!

I cannot bear the thought! She must be mine!
 Did Pyrrhus carry thunder in his hand,
 I'd stand the bolt, and challenge all his fury,
 Ere I resign'd Hermione.—By force
 I'll snatch her hence, and bear her to my ships;
 Have we forgot her mother Helen's rape?

Pyl. Will then Orestes turn a ravisher!
 And blot his embassy?

Orest. Oh, Pylades!

My grief weighs heavy on me:—'Twill distract me!

'O leave me to myself!—Let not thy friendship

'Involve thee in my woes. Too long already,

'Too long hast thou been punish'd for my crimes.

'It is enough, my friend!—It is enough!

'Let not thy generous love betray thee farther.

The gods have set me as their mark, to empty

'Their quivers on me.—Leave me to myself.

Mine be the danger; mine the enterprize.

All I request of thee is, to return,

And in my place convey Aftyanax

(As Pyrrhus has consented) into Greece.

Go, Pylades—

Pyl. Lead on, my friend, lead on!

Let us bear off Hermione! No toil,

No danger can deter a friend:—Lead on!

Draw up the Greeks; summon your num'rous train:

The ships are ready, and the wind fits fair:

There eastward lies the sea; the rolling waves

Break on those palace-stairs. I know each pass,

Each avenue and outlet of the court.

This very night we'll carry her on board.

Orest. Thou art too good!——I trespass on thy
 friendship:

But, oh! excuse a wretch, whom no man pities,

Except thyself: one just about to lose

The treasure of his soul: 'whom all mankind

'Conspire to hate, and one who hates himself.

When will my friendship be of use to thee?

Pyl. The question is unkind.—But now remember

To keep your counsels close, and hide your thoughts;

Let

Let not Hermione suspect—No more——
I see her coming, Sir——

Orest. Away, my friend;
I am advis'd; my all depends upon it. [*Ex.* Pylades.]

Enter Hermione, and Cleone.

Orest. Madam, your orders are obey'd; I have seen
Pyrrhus, my rival; and have gain'd him for you.
The king resolves to wed you.

Her. So I am told:

And farther, I'm inform'd that you, Orestes,
Are to dispose me for the intended marriage.

Orest. And are you, Madam, willing to comply?

Her. Could I imagine Pyrrhus lov'd me still?

After so long delays, who would have thought
His hidden flames would shew themselves at last,
And kindle in his breast, when mine expir'd?
I can suppose, with you, he fears the Greeks;
That it is interest, and not love, directs him;
And that my eyes had greater power o'er you.

Orest. No, princess, no! it is too plain he loves you.
Your eyes do what they will, and cannot fail
To gain a conquest, where you wish they should.

Her. What can I do? alas! my faith is promis'd:
Can I refuse what is not mine to give?
A princess is not at her choice to love;
All we have left us is a blind obedience:
And yet, you see, how far I had comply'd,
And made my duty yield to your intreaties.

Orest. Ah, cruel maid! you knew—but I have done.
All have a right to please themselves in love:
I blame not you. 'Tis true, I hop'd;—but you
Are mistress of your heart, and I'm content.
'Tis fortune is my enemy, not you.
But, Madam, I shall spare you farther pain
On this uneasy theme, and take my leave.

[*Ex.* Orestes.]

Her. Cleone, could'st thou think he'd be so calm!

Cleo. Madam, his silent grief sits heavy on him.
He is to be pitied. His too eager love
Has made him busy to his own destruction.

His threats have wrought this change of mind in
: Pyrrhus.

Her. Dost thou think Pyrrhus capable of fear!
Whom should the intrepid Pyrrhus fear? The Greeks?
Did he not lead their harras'd troops to conquest—
When they despair'd, when they retir'd from Troy,
And fought for shelter in their burning fleets?
Did he not then supply his father's place?
No, my Cleone, he is above constraint;
He acts unforc'd; and where he weds he loves.

Cleo. Oh, that Orestes had remain'd in Greece!
I fear to-morrow will prove fatal to him.

Her. Wilt thou discourse of nothing but Orestes?
Pyrrhus is mine again!—Is mine for ever!
Oh, my Cleone! I am wild with joy!
Pyrrhus, the bold! the brave! the godlike Pyrrhus!
—Oh, I could tell thee numberless exploits,
And tire thee with his battles—Oh, Cleone—

Cleo. Madam, conceal your joy—I see Andromache:
She weeps, and comes to speak her sorrows to you.

Her. I would indulge the gladness of my heart!
Let us retire: her grief is out of season.

Enter Andromache, and Cephisa.

Andr. Ah, Madam, whither, whither do you fly?
Where can your eyes behold a sight more pleasing
Than Hector's widow suppliant and in tears?
I come not an alarm'd, a jealous foe,
To envy you the heart your charms have won:
The only man I fought to please, is gone;
Kill'd in my sight, by an inhuman hand.
' Hector first taught me love; which my fond heart
' Shall ever cherish, till we meet in death.
But, Oh, I have a son!—And you, one day,
Will be no stranger to a mother's fondness:
But Heav'n forbid that you should ever know
A mother's sorrow for an only son.
Her joy, her bliss, her last surviving comfort!
When every hour she trembles for his life!
Your power o'er Pyrrhus may relieve my fears.
Alas, what danger is there in a child,

Sav'd from the wreck of a whole ruin'd empire ?
 Let me go hide him in some desert isle :
 You may rely upon my tender care
 To keep him far from perils of ambition :
 All he can learn of me, will be to weep !

Her. Madam, 'tis easy to conceive your grief :
 But, it would ill become me, to solicit
 In contradiction to my father's will :
 'Tis he who urges to destroy your son.
 Madam, if Pyrrhus must be wrought to pity,
 No woman does it better than yourself ;
 If you gain him, I shall comply of course.

[*Ex. Her. and Cleone.*]

Andr. Didst thou not mind, with what disdain she
 spoke ?

Youth and prosperity have made her vain ;
 She has not seen the fickle turns of life.

Ceph. Madam, were I as you, I'd take her counsel ?
 I'd speak my own distress : one look from you
 Will vanquish Pyrrhus, and confound the Greeks—
 See, where he comes—Lay hold on this occasion.

Enter Pyrrhus and Phœnix.

Pyr. Where is the princess ?—Did you not in-
 form me

Hermione was here ? [To Phœnix.]

Phœn. I thought so, Sir.

Andr. Thou seest, what mighty power my eyes have
 on him ! [To Ceph.]

Pyr. What says she, Phœnix ?

Andr. I have no hope left !

Phœn. Let us begone :—Hermione expects you.

Ceph. For Heav'n's sake, Madam, break this fullen
 silence.

Andr. My child's already promis'd !—

Ceph. But not given.

Andr. No, no !—my tears are vain ! His doom
 is fixt !

Pyr. See, if she deigns to cast one look upon us !
 Proud woman !

Andr.

Andr. I provoke him by my presence.

Let us retire.

Pyr. Come let us satisfy

The Greeks; and give them up this Phrygian boy.

Andr. Ah, Sir, recall those words——What have you said!

If you give up my son, Oh give up me!—

You, who so many times have sworn me friendship:

Oh, Heav'ns!—will you not look with pity on me?

Is there no hope? Is there no room for pardon?

Pyr. Phœnix will answer you: my word is past.

Andr. You, who would brave so many dangers for me.

Pyr. I was your lover then:—I now am free.

To favour you, I might have spar'd his life:

But you would ne'er vouchsafe to ask it of me.

Now 'tis too late.

Andr. Ah, Sir, you understood

'My tears, my wishes, which I durst not utter,

'Afraid of a repulse.' Oh, Sir, excuse

The pride of royal blood, that checks my soul,

You know, alas! I was not born to kneel,

To sue for pity, and to own a master.

Pyr. No! in your heart you curse me! you disdain
My generous flame, and scorn to be oblig'd!

'This very son, this darling of your soul,

'Would be less dear, did I preserve him for you.

'Your anger, your aversion fall on me!

'You hate me more than the whole league of Greece:

But I shall leave you to your great resentments.

Let us go, Phœnix, and appease the Greeks.

Andr. Then, let me die! and let me go to Hector.

Ceph. But, Madam——

Andr. What can I do more? The tyrant
Sees my distraction, and insults my tears. [*To Ceph.*
——Behold how low you have reduced a queen!

These eyes have seen my country laid in ashes;

My kindred fall in war; my father slain;

My husband dragg'd in his own blood; my son

Condemn'd to bondage, and myself a slave;

Yet,

Yet, in the midst of those unheard-of woes,
 'Twas some relief to find myself your captive;
 And that my son, deriv'd from ancient kings,
 Since he must serve, had Pyrrhus for his master.
 When Priam kneel'd, the great Achilles wept:
 I hop'd I should not find his son less noble.
 I thought the brave were still the most compassionate.
 Oh, do not, Sir, divide me from my child!
 If he must die——

Pyr. Phœnix, withdraw a while. [*Ex. Phœnix.*
 Rise, Madam—Yet you may preserve your son.
 I find whenever I provoke your tears,
 I furnish you with arms against myself.
 I thought my hatred fixt, before I saw you.
 Oh, turn your eyes upon me, while I speak!
 And see, if you discover in my looks
 An angry judge, or an obdurate foe.
 Why will you force me to desert your cause?
 In your son's name I beg we may be friends;
 ' Let me entreat you to secure his life!
 ' Must I turn suppliant for him?' Think, Oh think,
 'Tis the last time, you both may yet be happy!
 I know the ties I break; the foes I arm:
 I wrong Hermione; I send her hence;
 And with her diadem I bind your brows.
 Consider well; for 'tis of moment to you!
 Choose to be wretched, Madam, or a queen.
 ' My soul, consum'd with a whole year's despair,
 ' Can bear no longer these perplexing doubts;
 ' Enough of sighs, and tears, and threats I've try'd;
 ' I know if I'm depriv'd of you, I die:
 ' But Oh, I die, if I wait longer for you!
 I leave you to your thoughts. When I return,
 We'll to the temple: there you'll find your son;
 And there be crown'd, or give him up for ever.

[*Ex. Pyrrhus.*

Ceph. I told you, Madam, that, in spite of Greece,
 You would o'er-rule the malice of your fortune.

Andr. Alas! Cephisa, what have I obtain'd!
 Only a poor, short respite for my son.

Ceph.

Ceph. You have enough approv'd your faith to
To be reluctant still would be a crime. [*Hector*;
He would himself persuade you to comply.

Andr. How——wouldst thou give me Pyrrhus for
a husband?

Ceph. Think you, 'twill please the ghost of your
dead husband,

That you should sacrifice his son? Consider,
Pyrrhus once more invites you to a throne;
Turns all his power against the foes of Troy;
Remembers not Achilles was his father;
Retracts his conquest, and forgets his hatred.

Andr. But how can I forget it! How can I
Forget my Hector treated with dishonour;
Depriv'd of funeral rites; and vilely dragg'd,
A bloody corse, about the walls of Troy?
Can I forget the good old king his father,
Slain in my presence; at the altar slain!
Which vainly, for protection, he embrac'd?
Hast thou forgot that dreadful night, Cephisa,
When a whole people fell? Methinks I see
Pyrrhus enrag'd, and breathing vengeance, enter
Amidst the glare of burning palaces:
I see him hew his passage through my brothers;
And, bath'd in blood, lay all my kindred waste.
Think, in this scene of horror, what I suffer'd!
'This is the courtship I receiv'd from Pyrrhus;
And this the husband thou would'st give me! No,
We both will perish first! I'll ne'er consent.

Ceph. Since you resolve Astyanax shall die,
Haste to the temple, bid your son farewell.
Why do you tremble, Madam?

Andr. O Cephisa!

Thou hast awaken'd all the mother in me.
How can I bid farewell to the dear child,
The pledge, the image of my much-lov'd lord!
' Alas, I call to mind the fatal day,
' When his too forward courage led him forth
' To seek Achilles.

Ceph. Oh, the unhappy hour!

' 'Twas then Troy fell, and all her gods forfook her.

' *Andr.* That morn, Cephisa, that ill-fated morn,

' My husband bid thee bring Aftyanax ;

' He took him in his arms ; and, as I wept,

' My wife, my dear Andromache, said he,

' (Heaving with stifled sighs to see me weep)

' What fortune may attend my arms, the gods

' Alone can tell. To thee I give the boy ;

' Preserve him, as the token of our loves ;

' If I should fall, let him not miss his fire

' While thou surviv'ft ; but by thy tender care

' Let the son see, that thou didst love his father.

' *Ceph.* And will you throw away a life so preci-

' At once extirpate all the Trojan line ? [ous ?

' *Andr.* Inhuman king ! What has he done to suf-

' If I neglect your vows, is he to blame ? [fer ?

' Has he reproach'd you with his slaughter'd kindred ?

' Can he resent those ills he does not know ?

But, Oh ! while I deliberate he dies.

No, on, thou must not die, while I can save thee :

Oh ! let me find out Pyrrhus—Oh, Cephisa !

Do thou go find him.

Ceph. What must I say to him ?

Andr. Tell him I love my son to such excess—

But dost thou think he means the child shall die ?

Can love rejected turn to so much rage ?

Ceph. Madam, he'll soon be here—Resolve on something.

Andr. Well then, assure him—

Ceph. Madam, of your love ?

Andr. Alas, thou know'st that is not in my power.

Oh, my dead lord ! Oh, Priam's royal house !

Oh, my Aftyanax ! at what a price

Thy mother buys thee !—Let us go.

Ceph. But whither ?

And what does your unsettled heart resolve ?

Andr. Come, my Cephisa, let us go together,

To the sad monument which I have rais'd

To Hector's shade ; where in their sacred urn

The ashes of my hero lie inclos'd ;

The dear remains, which I have sav'd from Troy;
 There let me weep, there summon to my aid,
 With pious rites, my Hector's awful shade;
 Let him be witness to my doubts, my fears:
 My agonizing heart, my flowing tears:
 Oh! may he rise in pity from his tomb,
 And fix his wretched son's uncertain doom.

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

Andromache, Cephisa.

C E P H I S A

' **B**LEST be the tomb of Hector, that inspires
 ' These pious thoughts: or is it Hector's self,
 ' That prompts you to preserve your son! 'Tis he
 ' Who still presides o'er ruin'd Troy; 'tis he
 ' Who urges Pyrrhus to restore Astyanax.
 ' *Andr.* Pyrrhus has said he will; and thou hast
 heard him
 ' Just now renew the oft-repeated promise.
 ' *Ceph.* Already in the transports of his heart,
 ' He gives you up his kingdom, his allies,
 ' And thinks himself o'erpaid for all in you.
 ' *Andr.* I think I may rely upon his promise:
 ' And yet my heart is over-charg'd with grief.
 ' *Ceph.* Why should you grieve! You see he bids
 defiance
 ' To all the Greeks; and to protect your son
 ' Against their rage, has plac'd his guards about him;
 ' Leaving himself defenceless for his sake:
 ' But, Madam, think, the coronation pomp
 ' Will soon demand your presence in the temple:
 ' 'Tis time you lay aside these mourning weeds.

‘ *Andr.* I will be there ; but first would see my son.

‘ *Ceph.* Madam, you need not now be anxious for him,

‘ He will be always with you, all your own,
‘ To lavish the whole mother’s fondness on him.

‘ What a delight to train beneath your eye,
‘ A son, who grows no longer up in bondage ?

‘ A son, in whom a race of kings revive :

‘ But, Madam, you are sad, and wrapt in thought,

‘ As if you relish’d not your happiness.

‘ *Andr.* Oh, I must see my son once more, Cephisa !

‘ *Ceph.* Madam, he now will be no more a captive ;

‘ Your visits may be frequent as you please.

‘ To-morrow you may pass the live-long day——

‘ *And.* To-morrow ! Oh, Cephisa !—But, no more !

‘ Cephisa, I have always found thee faithful :

‘ A load of care weighs down my drooping heart.

‘ *Ceph.* Oh ! that ’twere possible for me to ease you.

‘ *Andr.* I soon shall exercise thy long try’d faith. —

‘ Mean while I do conjure thee, my Cephisa,

‘ Thou take no notice of my present trouble :

‘ And when I shall disclose my secret purpose,

‘ That thou be punctual to perform my will.

‘ *Ceph.* Madam, I have no will but yours. My life

‘ Is nothing, balanc’d with my love to you.

‘ *Andr.* I thank thee good Cephisa, my Aftyanax

‘ Will recompense thy friendship to his mother.

‘ But, come ; my heart’s at ease : assist me now

‘ To change this sable habit —Yonder comes

Hermione ; I would not meet her rage.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Hermione, Cleone.

Cleo. This unexpected silence, this reserve,
This outward calm, this settled frame of mind,
After such wrongs and insults, much surprize me !
You, who before could not command your rage,
When Pyrrhus look’d but kindly on his captive ;
How can you bear unmov’d, that he should wed her ?

And

And seat her on a throne which you should fill?
I fear this dreadful stillness in your soul!

'Twere better, Madam—

Her. Have you call'd Orestes?

Cleo. Madam, I have; his love is too impatient
Not to obey with speed the welcome summons.
His love-sick heart o'erlooks his unkind usage:
His ardour's still the same—Madam, he's here.

Enter Orestes.

Ah, Madam, is it true? Does, then, Orestes
At length attend you by your own commands?
What can I do——

Her. Orestes, do you love me?

Orest. What means that question, princess? Do I
love you?

My oaths, my perjuries, my hopes, my fears,
My farwel, my return, all speak my love.

Her. Avenge my wrongs, and I believe them all.

Orest. It shall be done——my soul has catch'd the
alarm,

We'll spirit up the Greeks—I'll lead them on——
Your cause shall animate our fleets and armies,
Let us return: let us not lose a moment,
But urge the fate of this devoted land:
Let us depart.

Her. No prince, let us stay here!

I will have vengeance here—I will not carry
This load of infamy to Greece, nor trust
The chance of war to vindicate my wrongs.
Ere I depart I'll make Epirus mourn.

If you avenge me, let it be this instant;
My rage brooks no delay—haste to the temple,
Haste, prince, and sacrifice him.

Orest. Whom!

Her. Why Pyrrhus.

Orest. Pyrrhus! Did you say, Pyrrhus!

Her. You demur!

Oh fly, begone! give me no time to think!
Talk not of laws—he tramples on all laws—
Let me not hear him justify'd——away.

Orest. You cannot think I'll justify my rival.
 Madam, your love has made him criminal.
 You shall have vengeance ; I'll have vengeance too :
 But let our hatred be profest and open :
 Let us alarm all Greece, denounce a war ;
 Let us attack him in his strength, and hunt him down
 By conquest : should I turn base assassin,
 'Twould fully all the kings I represent.

Her. Have I not been dishonour'd ! set at nought !
 Expos'd to public scorn !——and will you suffer
 The tyrant, who dares to use me thus, to live ?
 Know, prince, I hate him more than once I lov'd him.
 The gods alone can tell how once I lov'd him ;
 Yes, the false perjur'd man, I once did love him ;
 And spite of all his crimes and broken vows,
 If he should live, I may relapse—who knows
 But I to-morrow may forgive his wrongs ?

Orest. First let me tear him piece-meal—he shall die.
 But, Madam, give me leisure to contrive
 The place, the time, the manner of his death ;
 Yet I'm a stranger in the court of Pyrrhus ;
 Scarce have I set my foot within Epirus,
 When you enjoin me to destroy the prince.
 It shall be done this very night.

Her. But now,
 This very hour, he weds Andromache ;
 The temple shines with pomp ; the golden throne
 Is now prepar'd ; the joyful rites begin ;
 My shame is public—Oh, be speedy, prince !
 My wrath's impatient—Pyrrhus lives too long !
 Intent on love, and heedless of his person,
 He covers with his guards the Trojan boy.
 Now is the time ; assemble all your Greeks ;
 Mine shall assist them ; let their fury loose :
 Already they regard him as a foe.
 Begone, Orestes—kill the faithless tyrant :
 My love shall recompense the glorious deed.

Orest. Consider, Madam——

Her. You but mock my rage !
 I was contriving how to make you happy.

Think you to merit by your idle sighs,
 And not attest your love by one brave action ?
 Go, with your boasted constancy ! and leave
 Hermione to execute her own revenge !
 I blush to think how my too easy faith
 Has twice been baffled in one shameful hour !

Orest. Hear me but speak !——you know I'll die to
 serve you !

Her. I'll go myself : I'll stab him at the altar ;
 Then drive the poniard, reeking with his blood,
 Through my own heart. In death we shall unite :
 Better to die with him, than live with you !

Orest. That were to make him blest ; and me more
 wretched :

Madam, he dies by me :—Have you a foe,
 And shall I let him live ? My rival, too ?
 Ere yon meridian sun declines, he dies :
 And you shall say, that I deserve your love.

Her. Go prince ; strike home ! and leave the rest
 to me ;

Let all your ships stand ready for our flight.

[*Ex.* Orestes.

Cleo. Madam, you'll perish in this bold attempt.

Her. Give me my vengeance, I'm content to perish.
 I was to blame to trust it with another :
 In my own hands it had been more secure.

Orestes hates not Pyrrhus, as I hate him :

‘ I should have thrust the dagger home ; have seen
 ‘ The tyrant curse me with his parting breath,
 ‘ And roll about his dying eyes, in vain,
 ‘ To find Andromache, whom I would hide.

Oh, would Orestes, when he gives the blow,
 Tell him he dies my victim !—Haste, Cleone ;
 Charge him to say, Hermione's resentments,
 Not those of Greece, have sentenc'd him to death.
 Haste, my Cleone ! My revenge is lost,
 If Pyrrhus knows not that he dies by me !

Cleo. I shall obey your orders——But see
 The King approach !—Who could expect him here.

Her. O fly !—Cleone, fly ! and bid Orestes

Not to proceed a step before I see him.

[*Ex.* Cleone.]

Enter Pyrrhus.

Pyr. Madam, I ought to shun an injur'd princess:
Your distant looks reproach me: and I come
Not to defend, but to avow my guilt.

Pyrrhus will ne'er approve his own injustice;
Nor form excuses, while his heart condemns him.

' I might perhaps alledge, our warlike fires,
' Unknown to us, engag'd us to each other,
' And join'd our hearts by contract, not by love;

' But I detest such cobweb arts, I own
' My father's treaty, and allow its force.

' I sent ambassadors to call you hither;
' Receiv'd you as my queen; and hop'd my oaths
' So oft renew'd might ripen into love.

' The gods can witness, Madam, how I fought
' Against Andromache's too fatal charms!

' And still I wish I had the power to leave
' This Trojan beauty, and be just to you.

Discharge your anger on this perjur'd man!
For I abhor my crime! and should be pleas'd
To hear you speak your wrongs aloud: no terms,
No bitterness of wrath, nor keen reproach,
Will equal half the upbraidings of my heart.

Her. I find, Sir, you can be sincere: you scorn
To act your crimes with fear, like other men.

A hero should be bold; above all laws;
Be bravely false; and laugh at solemn ties.

To be perfidious shews a daring mind!
And you have nobly triumph'd o'er a maid!

To court me; to reject me; to return;
Then to forsake me for a Phrygian slave:

To lay proud Troy in ashes; then to raise
The son of Hector, and renounce the Greeks,
Are actions worthy the great soul of Pyrrhus.

Pyr. Madam, go on: give your resentments birth;
And pour forth all your indignation on me.

Her.

Her. 'Twould please your queen, should I upbraid
your falshood;

Call you perfidious, traitor, all the names
That injur'd virgins lavish on your sex;
I should o'erflow with tears, and die with grief,
And furnish out a tale to soothe her pride;
But, Sir, I would not over-charge her joys.
If you would charm Andromache, recount
Your bloody battles, your exploits, your slaughters,
Your great achievements, in her father's palace.
She needs must love the man, who fought so bravely,
And in her sight slew half her royal kindred.

Pyr. With horror I look back on my past deeds!
I punish'd Helen's wrongs too far; I shed
Too much of blood: but, Madam, Helen's daughter
Should not object those ills the mother caus'd.
However I am pleas'd to find you hate me:
I was too forward to accuse myself:
The man who ne'er was lov'd, can ne'er be false.
Obedience to a father brought you hither;
And I stood bound by promise to receive you:
But our desires were different ways inclin'd;
And you, I own were not oblig'd to love me.

Her. Have I not lov'd you, then! perfidious man!
For you I slighted all the Grecian princes;
Forsook my father's house; conceal'd my wrongs,
When most provok'd: would not return to Sparta,
In hopes that time might fix your wavering heart,
I loved you when inconstant: and even now,
Inhuman king, that you pronounce my death,
My heart still doubts, if I should love, or hate you;
But, Oh, since you resolve to wed another,
Defer your cruel purpose till to-morrow!
That I may not be here to grace your triumph!
This is the last request I e'er shall make you—
See if the barbarous prince vouchsafes an answer!
Go, then, to the lov'd Phrygian! hence! 'begone!
And bear to her those vows, that once were mine:
Go, in defiance to the avenging gods!

Begone! the priest expects you at the altar—
But, tyrant, have a care I come not thither.

[*Ex.* Her.

Enter Phœnix.

Phœ. Sir, did you mind her threats? your life's in
danger;

'There is no trifling with a woman's rage.
The Greeks that swarm about the court, all hate you;
Will treat you as their country's enemy,
And join in her revenge: besides, Orestes'
Still loves her to distraction: Sir I beg—

Pyr. How, Phœnix, should I fear a woman's threats?
A nobler passion takes up all my thought:
I must prepare to meet Andromache.
Do thou place all my guards about her son:
If he be safe, Pyrrhus is free from fear.

[*Ex.* Pyrrhus.

Phœnix, *alone.*

Oh, Pyrrhus! oh what pity 'tis, the gods,
Who fill'd thy soul with every kingly virtue,
Form'd thee for empire and consummate greatness,
Should leave thee so expos'd to wild desires,
That hurry thee beyond the bounds of reason!

[*A flourish of Trumpets.*

'Such was Achilles; generous, fierce, and brave:
'Open and undesigning: but impatient,
'Undisciplin'd, and not to be controul'd:
'I fear this whirl of passion, this career,
'That over-bears reflection and cool thought;
'I tremble for the event!'—But see, the queen,
Magnificent in royal pride, appears.
I must obey, and guard her son from danger.

[*Ex.* Phœ.

Enter Andromache, *and* Cephisa.

Ceph. Madam, once more you look and move a
queen!
Your sorrows are dispers'd, your charms revive,
And

And every faded beauty blooms anew.

Andr. Yet all is not as I could wish, Cephisa.

Ceph. You see the king so watchful o'er your son;
Decks him with princely robes, with guards surrounds
Astyanax begins to reign already. [him.

Andr. Pyrrhus is nobly minded: and I fain
Would live to thank him for Astyanax:
'Tis a vain thought—However, since my child
Has such a friend, I ought not to repine.

' *Ceph.* These dark unfoldings of your soul perplex me.

' What meant those floods of tears, those warm em-
' As if you bid your son adieu for ever? [braces,
For Heav'n's sake, Madam, let me know your griefs!
If you mistrust my faith—

Andr. That were to wrong thee.

Oh, my Cephisa! this gay, borrow'd air,
This blaze of jewels, and this bridal dress,
Are but mock-trappings to conceal my woe:
My heart still mourns; I still am Hector's widow.

Ceph. Will you then break the promise giv'n to Pyrrhus;

Blow up his rage afresh, and blast your hopes?

Andr. I thought, Cephisa, thou hadst known thy mistress.

Could'st thou believe I would be false to Hector?

Fall off from such a husband! break his rest,

And call him to this hated light again,

To see Andromache in Pyrrhus' arms?

' Would Hector, were he living, and I dead,

' Forget Andromache, and wed her foe?

Ceph. I cannot guess what drift your thoughts pursue;

But, oh, I fear there's something dreadful in it!

Must then Astyanax be doom'd to die;

And you to linger out a life in bondage?

' *Andr.* Nor this, nor that, Cephisa, will I bear;

' My word is pass'd to Pyrrhus, his to me;

' And I rely upon his promis'd faith.

' Unequal as he is, I know him well:

' Pyrrhus is violent, but he's sincere,

' And

- ‘ And will perform beyond what he has sworn.
 ‘ The Greeks will but incense him more ; their rage
 ‘ Will make him cherish Hector’s son.
 ‘ *Ceph.* Ah, Madam !
 ‘ Explain these riddles to my boding heart !
 ‘ *Andr.* Thou mayst remember, for thou oft hast
 heard me
 ‘ Relate the dreadful vision, which I saw,
 ‘ When first I landed captive in Epirus.
 ‘ That very night, as in a dream I lay,
 ‘ A ghastly figure, full of gaping wounds,
 ‘ His eyes aglare, his hair all stiff with blood,
 ‘ Full in my sight thrice shook his head, and groan’d
 ‘ I soon discern’d my slaughter’d Hector’s shade ;
 ‘ But, Oh, how chang’d ! Ye gods, how much unlike
 ‘ The living Hector !——Loud he bid me fly !
 ‘ Fly from Achilles’ son ! then sternly frown’d,
 ‘ And disappear’d : struck with the dreadful sound,
 ‘ I started and awak’d.
 , *Ceph.* But did he bid you
 ‘ Destroy Astyanax ?
 ‘ *Andr.* Cephisa, I’ll preserve him ;
 With my own life, Cephisa, I’ll preserve him.
 ‘ *Ceph.* What may these words, so full of horror,
 mean ?

Andr. Know then the secret purpose of my soul :
 Andromache will not be false to Pyrrhus,
 Nor violate her sacred love to Hector.
 This hour I’ll meet the king ; the holy priest
 Shall join us, and confirm our mutual vows :
 This will secure a father to my child :
 That done, I have no further use for life :
 This pointed dagger, this determin’d hand,
 Shall save my virtue, and conclude my woes.

- ‘ *Ceph.* Ah, Madam ! recollect your scatter’d rea-
 son ;
 ‘ This fell despair ill suits your present fortunes.
 ‘ *And.* No other stratagem can serve my purpose :
 ‘ This is the sole expedient to be just
 ‘ To Hector, to Astyanx, to Pyrrhus.
 ‘ I shall soon visit Hector, and the shades

Wilt lend a hand to close thy mistress' eyes.

Ceph. Oh, never think that I will stay behind you!

Andr. No, my Cephisa; I must have thee live.

- ' Remember, thou didst promise to obey,
- ' And to be secret; wilt thou now betray me?
- ' After thy long, thy faithful service, wilt thou
- ' Refuse my last commands, my dying wish?
- ' Once more I do conjure thee live for me.

Ceph. Life is not worth my care when you are

Andr. I must commit into thy faithful hands [gone.

All that is dear and precious to my soul:
 Live, and supply my absence to my child;
 All that remains of Troy; a future progeny
 Of heroes, and a distant line of kings,
 In him, is all intrusted to thy care.

Ceph. But, Madam, what will be the rage of Pyr-

- ' Defrauded of his promis'd happiness? [rhus,

Andr. That will require thy utmost skill: Ob-

- ' The first impetuous onsets of his grief; [serve
- ' Use ev'ry artifice to keep him stedfast.
- ' Sometimes with tears thou mayst discourse of me;
- ' Speak of our marriage; let him think I lov'd him;
- ' Tell him my soul repos'd itself on him,
- ' When I resign'd my son to his protection.

Ceph. Oh, for a spirit to support my grief!

Is there ought more before you go for ever?

Andr. Oh, my Cephisa! my sworn heart is full!

I have a thousand farewells to my son:

But tears break in!—Grief interrupts my speech—

My soul o'erflows in fondness—Let him know

I dy'd to save him:—' And would die again.'

Season his mind with early hints of glory;

Make him acquainted with his ancestors;

Trace out their shining story in his thoughts;

Dwell on th' exploits of his immortal father,

And sometimes let him hear his mother's name.

' Let him reflect upon his royal birth

' With modest pride; Pyrrhus will prove a friend:

' But let him know he has a conqueror's right.

He must be taught to stifle his resentments,

And sacrifice his vengeance to his safety.

Should he prove headstrong, rash, or unadvis'd,
He then will frustrate all his mother's virtue,
Provoke his fate, and I shall die in vain.

Ceph. Alas, I fear I never shall outlive you!

Andr. No more:—thy tears, Cephisa, will betray
Assume a chearful look: but still remember— [me;
[*Flourish within.*

Hark how the trumpet, with its sprightly notes,
Proclaims the appointed hour, and calls us hence.
Hector, I come, once more a queen, to join thee!
Thus the gay victim, with fresh garlands crown'd.
Pleas'd with the sacred sife's enliv'ning sound,
Through gazing crouds in solemn state proceeds,
And drest in fatal pomp magnificently bleeds. [*Exeunt.*

END of the FOURTH ACT.

ACT V.

Hermione alone.

WHAT have I done? Where am I? Where is
Pyrrhus?

Ye Gods! what mean these horrors?—I'm undone!

My soul is on the rack!—I cannot bear it!—

Why do I wander like some guilty ghost?

What brought me to this place? What keeps me here?

The court of Pyrrhus has no room for me!

Do I still doubt if I should love or hate him?

Hard hearted man! how unconcern'd he left me!

Did he once sigh? Bestow one pitying look?

Once shed a tear? or speak one soft kind word?

Did he so much as feign one moment's sorrow,
To calm my griefs, and mitigate his falsehood?—

Why am I still thus anxious for his life?

Why do I start at his impending fate?

Shall he then live? Shall the base traitor live
To laugh at my distress? No, let him perish!

Be quick, Orestes?—Execute my orders!

Alas! my orders! Oh, preposterous guilt!

Can I decree the death of him I love ?
Was it for this my soul delighted in him ?
Was it for this I left my father's court ?
Have I then cross'd so many realms and seas
To murder Pyrrhus ?

Enter Cleone.

Her. Oh, Cleone, help me !
What have I done ? Is Pyrrhus yet alive ?
What say'st thou ?—Answer me : Where is the king ?

Cleo. Madam ! I saw the cruel prince set forward,
Triumphant in his looks, and full of joy.
Still as he walk'd his ravish'd eyes were fixt
On the fair captive ; while through shouting crowds
She pass'd along with a dejected air,
And seem'd to mourn her Hector to the last.

Her. Insulting tyrant ! I shall burst with rage !—
But say, Cleone, didst thou mark him well ?
Was his brow smooth ? Say, did there not appear
Some shade of grief ; some little cloud of sorrow ?
Did he not stop ? Did he not once look back ?
Didst thou approach him ? Was he not confounded ?
Did he not———Oh, be quick and tell me all !

Cleo. Madam, the tumult of his joy admits
No thought but love. Unguarded he march'd on,
'Midst a promiscuous throng of friends and foes.
His cares all turn upon Altyanax,
Whom he has lodg'd within the citadel,
Defended by the strength of all his guards. [*Orestes?*]

Her. Enough !—he dies !—the traitor ?—Where's

Cleo. He's in the temple with his whole retinue.

Her. Is he still resolute ? Is he still determin'd ?

Cleo. Madam, I fear———

Her. How !—Is Orestes false ?

Does he betray me too ?

Cleo. A thousand doubts

Perplex his soul and wound him with remorse :

His virtue and his love prevail by turns.

He told me Pyrrhus should not fall ignobly :

Pyrrhus, the warlike son of great Achilles.

He dreads the censure of the Grecian states ;

Of all mankind ; and fears to stain his honour.

Her.

Her. Poor tim'rous wretch ! 'tis false ! he basely
To cope with dangers, and encounter death : [fears !
'Tis that he fears :—Am I bright Helen's daughter ?
To vindicate her wrongs all Greece conspir'd ;
For her confederate nations fought, and kings were
Troy was o'erthrown, and a whole empire fell. [slain ;
My eyes want force to raise a lover's arm
Against a tyrant that has dar'd to wrong me.

Cleo. Madam, like Helen, trust your cause to Greece.

Her. No ; I'll avenge myself ; I'll to the temple ;
I'll overturn the altar, stab the priest :
I'll hurl destruction like a whirlwind round me !
They must not wed ! they must not live ! they shall
Let me be gone ! I have no time to lose ! [not !
Stand off ! hold me not ! I am all distraction !
Oh, Pyrrhus ! Tyrant ! Traitor ! Thou shalt bleed.

Enter Orestes.

Orest. Madam, 'tis done ; your orders are obey'd :
The tyrant lies expiring at the altar.

Her. Is Pyrrhus slain ?

Orest. Even now he gasps in death.
Our Greeks all undistinguish'd in the crowd,
Flock'd to the temple, and dispers'd themselves
On every side the altar : I was there ;
Pyrrhus observ'd me with a haughty eye,
And, proud to triumph over Greece in me,
From his own brows he took the diadem
And bound it on the temples of his captive :
Receive, said he, my crown ; receive my faith ;
Mine and my people's sovereign reign for ever.
From this blest hour, a father to your son ;
I'll scourge his foes : henceforward be he styl'd
The Trojan king ; ' I swear it at the altar,
' And call the gods to ratify my vows.
His subjects with loud acclamations shook
The spacious dome. Our Greeks, enrag'd, cried out,
Revenge ! Revenge ! broke thro' the thronging press,
And rush'd tumultuous on the unguarded king.
' Their eager fury left no work for me.
Pyrrhus a-while oppos'd their clashing swords,
And dealt his fatal blows on ev'ry side

With

With manly fierceness; till oppress'd by numbers,
 Streaming with blood, all over gash'd with wounds,
 He reel'd, he groan'd, and at the altar fell.—
 Haste, Madam; let us fly! Haste to our ships!
 They lie unmoor'd: our friends attend us there.

Her. What have they done!

Orest. Madam, forgive their rage.

I own your vengeance had been more compleat,
 Had Pyrrhus fall'n by me, and had he known
 Hermione chastis'd him by my arm.

Her. Peace, monster, peace! Go tell thy horrid
 To savages, and howl it in the deserts. [tale
 Would'st thou impute to me thy barb'rous guilt?
 Me would'st thou make th' accomplice of thy crimes?
 Hence to thy Greeks, and boast thy foul exploits!
 My soul abhors them! I disclaim the deed!
 Begone! I know thee not! Thou fell barbarian!
 What had he done? What could provoke thy madness
 To assassinate so great, so brave a man?
 Who set thee on?

Orest. Oh, grant me patience, heav'n!
 With your own lips did you not curse the tyrant,
 Pronounce his death, and urge me to destroy him?

Her. What if, transported by my boundless passion,
 I could not bear to see him wed another?
 Were you to obey a jealous woman's phrenzy?
 You shou'd have divid'd into my inmost thoughts:
 My heart, tho' full of rage, was free from malice;
 And all my anger was excess of love.
 Why did you take me at my word? You saw
 The struggles of my soul; you heard me rave;
 You should have question'd me a thousand times;
 Yet still have doubted, and still question'd on,
 Before you ventur'd on a life so precious. [my will—

Orest. Hear me but speak: Heaven knows, against

Her. Why did you not return? Why not consult
 A second time? And, undetermin'd still, [me
 Again return, and still find new delays? [hounds!
 What had your rash officious Greeks, dire blood-
 To do with my revenge? What drew you hither?
 To bring on me the vengeful woes that haunt you?

Are these the fruits of your detested love ?
 Your fatal embassy, your hateful presence,
 Drove Pyrrhus to my rival ; and destroys
 Both him and me. He might have lov'd me still,
 Had you ne'er interpos'd——Avaunt ! Be gone !
 And leave me in Epirus. I renounce
 My friends, my country, Greece, and all mankind :
 But chiefly I renounce thee ! monster, thee : [*Exit.*

Orest. Am I awake ? Where am I ? Soft, my soul ;
 Be not too rash.——Was that Hermione ?
 Why should her anger thunder against me ?
 Was not this blood shed all by her command ?—
 I am, indeed, a most outrageous monster !
 A ruffian, murderer, a base assassin !
 And all to please a false, ungrateful woman.
 Henceforward let the laws of nations cease ;
 And let the pale, that severs right and wrong,
 Things sacred and profane, be broken down ;
 Gods in their temples, kings upon their thrones,
 Are not in safety, while Orestes lives.
 Oh, never more shall my torn mind be heal'd,
 Nor taste the gentle comforts of repose !
 A dreadful band of gloomy cares surround me,
 And lay strong siege to my distracted soul.

Enter Pylades, attended by Greeks.

Pyl. Haste, prince ; let us be gone : 'tis death to
 Andromache reigns queen : she gives the alarm, [*stay.*
 And vows revenge upon the foes of Pyrrhus.
 The people arm and muster in the streets :
 Our Greeks will not be able long to guard
 The palace gates, and to secure our flight.
 We must be speedy, Sir.

Orest. You may depart,
 My friends——Hermione and I remain——
 Her cruelty has quite undone me !——‘ Go
 ‘ And leave me to myself——I'll find her out.

Pyl. Alas, unhappy princess ! she's no more ;
 ‘ Forget her, Sir, and save yourself with us.

Orest. Hermione no more !—Oh, all ye powers !

Pyl. Full of disorder, wildness in her looks,
 With hands expanded, and dishevell'd hair,

Breath-

Breathless and pale, with shrieks she sought the tem-
 In the mid-way she met the corps of Pyrrhus; [ple;
 She startled at the sight; then, stiff with horror,
 Gaz'd frightful: waken'd from the dire amaze,
 She rais'd her eyes to heav'n with such a look
 As spoke her sorrows, and reproach'd the gods:
 Then plung'd a poniard deep within her breast,
 And fell on Pyrrhus, grasping him in death.

Orest. I thank you, gods—I never could expect
 To be so wretched—You have been industrious
 To finish your decrees; to make Orestes
 A dreadful instance of your power to punish;
 I'm singled out to bear the wrath of heav'n.

Pyl. You hazard your retreat by these delays.
 The guards will soon beset us. Your complaints
 Are vain, and may be fatal.

Orest. True, my friend:
 And therefore 'twas I thank'd the bounteous gods.
 My fate's accomplish'd—I shall die content.
 Oh, bear me hence—blow, winds!—

Pyl. Let us be gone. [call!

Orest. The murder'd lovers wait me—Hark, they
 Nay, if your blood still reeks, I'll mingle mine:
 One tomb will hold us all.

Pyl. Alas! I fear
 His ravings will return with his misfortunes.

Orest. I am dizzy!—Clouds!—Quite lost in utter
 darkness!

Guide me, some friendly pilot, through the storm.
 I shiver! Oh, I freeze!—So:—Light returns;
 'Tis the grey dawn—See, Pylades!—Behold!—
 I am encompass'd with a sea of blood!—

The crimson billows!—Oh! my brain's on fire!

Pyl. How is it, Sir?—Repose yourself on me.

Orest. Pyrrhus, stand off!—What would'st thou?—
 How he glares!

What envious hand has clos'd thy wounds?—Have at
 It is Hermione that strikes—Confusion! [thee.
 She catches Pyrrhus in her arms.—Oh, save me!
 How terrible she looks! She knits her brow!

She

She frowns me dead ! She frights me into madness !
Where am I ?—Who are you ?

Pyl. Alas, poor prince !

‘ Help to support him.—How he pants for breath !

Orest. This is most kind, my Pylades—Oh, why,
Why was I born to give thee endless trouble ?

Pyl. All will go well ; he settles into reason.

Orest. Who talks of reason ? Better to have none
Than not enough.—Run, some one, tell my Greeks,
I will not have them touch the king.—Now—now
I blaze again !—See there !—Look where they come ;
A shoal of furies—How they swarm about me !—
My terror !—Hide me !—Oh, their snaky locks !
Hark, how they hiss !—See, see their flaming brands !
Now they let drive full at me !—How they grin,
And shake their iron whips !—My ears ! what yelling !
And see, Hermione !—she sets them on—

Thrust not your scorpions thus into my bosom !

Oh !—I am stung to death !—Dispatch me soon !

There—Take my heart, Hermione !—Tear it out !

Disjoint me ! kill me ! Oh, my tortur’d soul !—

Pyl. Kind heav’n restore him to his wonted calm !

Oft have I seen him rave : but never thus :

Quite spent !—Assist me, friends, to bear him off.

Our time is short : should his strong rage return,

’T would be beyond our power to force him hence.

Away, my friends ! I hear the portal open. [*Ex.*

Enter Phœnix, attended by Guards.

Phœn. All, all are fled !—Orestes is not here—

Triumphant villains !—The base, giddy rabble,

Whose hands should all have been employ’d with fire,

To waste the fleet, flock’d round the dying princess ;

And, while they stand agaze, the Greeks embark.

Oh, ’tis too plain !—this sacrilegious murder

Was authoriz’d.—Th’ ambassador’s escape

Declares his guilt.—Most bloody embassy !

Most unexampled deed !—Where, where, ye gods,

Is majesty secure, if in your temples

You give it no protection !—See the queen.

[*A Flourish of Trumpets.*

Enter

Enter Andromache and Cephisa.

Andr. Yes, ye inhuman Greeks! the time will come
When you shall dearly pay your bloody deeds!
How should the Trojans hope for mercy from you,
When thus you turn your impious rage on Pyrrhus;
Pyrrhus, the bravest man in all your league;
The man whose single valour made you triumph.

[A dead March behind.]

Is my child there?—

Ceph. It is the corps of Pyrrhus.

The weeping soldiers bear him on their shields.

Andr. Ill-fated prince! too negligent of life:
And too unwary of the faithless Greeks!
Cut off in the fresh rip'ning prime of manhood,
Even in the pride of life: thy triumphs new,
And all thy glories in full blossom round thee!
The very Trojans would bewail thy fate.

Ceph. Alas, then, will your sorrows never end!

Andr. Oh, never, never!—While I live, my tears
Will never cease; for I was born to grieve.—
Give present orders for the fun'ral pomp: *[To Phœn.]*
Let him be rob'd in all his regal state;
Place round him ev'ry shining mark of honour:
And let the pile, that consecrates his ashes,
Rise like his fame, and blaze above the clouds.

[A Flourish of Trumpets.]

Ceph. That sound proclaims th' arrival of the prince,
The guards conduct him from the citadel.

Andr. With open arms I'll meet him!—Oh, Ce-
A springing joy, mixt with a soft concern, *[phisa!]*
A pleasure which no language can express,
An extacy that mothers only feel,
Plays round my heart, and brightens up my sorrow,
Like gleams of sunshine in a low'ring sky.

Though plung'd in ills, and exercis'd in care,
Yet never let the noble mind despair:
When prest by dangers and beset with foes,
The gods their timely succour interpose;
And when our virtue sinks, o'erwhelm'd with grief,
By unforeseen expedients brings relief.

E P I L O G U E.

Written by Mr. Budgell of the Inner Temple.

Spoken by ANDROMACHE.

I Hope you'll own, that with becoming art,
I've play'd my game, and topp'd the widow's part.
My spouse, poor man, could not live out the play,
But dy'd commodiously on wedding-day;
While I, his relict, made at one bold fling,
Myself a princess, and young Sty a king.

You, ladies, who protract a lover's pain,
And bear your servants sigh whole years in vain;
Which of you all would not on marriage venture,
Might she so soon upon her jointure enter?

'Twas a strange scape! had Pyrrhus liv'd till now,
I had been finely hamper'd in my vow.

To die by one's own hand, and fly the charms
Of love and life in a young monarch's arms!

'Twere an hard fate——ere I had undergone it,
I might have took one night——to think upon it.

But why, you'll say, was all this grief express'd
For a first husband, laid long since at rest?

Why so much coldness to my kind protector?

—Ah, ladies! had you known the good man Hector!

Homer will tell you, (or I'm misinform'd,)

That, when enrag'd, the Grecian camp he storm'd;

To break the ten-fold barriers of the gate,

He threw a stone of such prodigious weight

As no two men could lift, not even of those,

Who in that age of thund'ring mortals rose:

—It would have sprain'd a dozen modern beaux.

At length, howe'er, I laid my weeds aside,
And sunk the widow in the well-dress'd bride.

In you it still remains to grace the play,

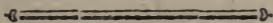
And bless with joy my coronation day;

Take, then, ye circles of the brave and fair,

The fatherless and widow to your care.

F I N I S.

BELL'S EDITION.



A L Z I R A.

A TRAGEDY.

As written by AARON HILL.

DISTINGUISHING ALSO THE

VARIATIONS OF THE THEATRE,

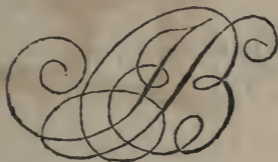
AS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book,

By PERMISSION of the MANAGERS,

By Mr. WILD, Prompter.



L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN BELL, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand.

MDCCLXXXVII.

MEMORANDUM

TO : SAC, [illegible]

FROM : [illegible]

SUBJECT: [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

To his Royal Highness

F R E D E R I C K

PRINCE OF

W A L E S.

S I R,

THOUGH a prince is born a patron, yet a benevolent expansion of his heart gives nobler title to the homage of the arts, than all the greatness of his power to propagate them.—There respect is, either way, so much your Royal Highness's unquestioned due, that he who asks your leave to offer such a duty, calls in question your prerogative, or means to sell his own acknowledgments.

They have not marked, with penetration, the distinction of your spirit, who dare look upon you as inclosed against the access of sincerity. The judgment and humanity of princes are obscured by difficulties in approaching them. Nor can the benefactors of mankind be so far inconsistent with themselves, as to interpose the obstacles of distance, or cold ceremony, between their goodness, and our gratitude.

Allow me, therefore, Sir, the honour to present Alzira to your patronage: disclaiming, for myself, all expectation of your notice. It is just that I should give up my own small pretensions: but Mr. de Voltaire brings title to your Royal Highness's regard. The merit of his work

will recommend him to your judgment: and the noble justice he has done her Majesty's distinguished character, in his French preface to this tragedy, (himself mean while a foreigner, and writing in a foreign nation) will, perhaps, deserve the glory of the son's partiality, in sense of reverence for the royal mother.

It were indeed, some violation of respect and gratitude, not to devote Alzira to the hand that honoured her, in public, with an applause so warm and weighty, in her representation on the English theatre.—Here Mr. de Voltaire enjoyed the triumph due to genius; while his heroic characters at the same time, made evident the force of nature, when it operates upon resembling qualities.—When tragedies are strong in sentiment, they will be touchstones to their hearer's hearts. The narrow and inhumane will be unattentive, or unmoved; while princely spirits, like your Royal Highness's, (impelled by their own conscious tendency) shew us an example in their generous sensibility, how great thoughts should be received by those who can think greatly.

Yet, in one strange circumstance, Alzira suffered by the honour of your approbation; for while the audience hung their eyes upon your Royal Highness's discerning delicacy, their joy to see you warmed by, and applauding most, those sentiments which draw their force from love of pity, and of liberty, became the only passion they would feel; and thereby lessened their attention to the very scenes they owed it to.

Can it be possible, after so important a public declaration in honour of passion and sentiment, that this best use of the poet's art, should any longer continue to languish under general neglect, or indifference?—No, surely, Sir!—Your Royal Highness, but persisting to keep reason and nature in countenance at the theatres, will universally establish what you so generously and openly avow. For, if where men love, they will imitate, your example must be copied by millions; till the influence of your attraction shall have planted your taste; and overspread three kingdoms with laurels.

It may at present perhaps, be a fruitless, but it can never be an irrational wish, that a theatre entirely new, (if not rather the old ones new-modelled) professing only
what

what is serious and manly, and sacred to the interests of wisdom and virtue, might arise under some powerful and popular protection, such as that of your Royal Highness's distinguished countenance!—To what probable lengths of improvement would not such a spur provoke genius!—Or, should it fail to do that, it would make manifest, at least, that rather wit is wanting than encouragement; and that these opprobrious excrescencies of our stage, which, under the disguise of entertainments, have defamed and insulted a people, had a meaner derivation, than from the hope of delighting our princes.

It has been a misfortune to poetry, in this nation, that it was too superciliously under-rated; and, to acknowledge truth on both sides, for the most part practised too lightly.—But by those who consider it according to the demands of its character, it will be found intitled, beyond many other arts, to the political affection of princes: being more persuasive in its nature than rhetoric; and more comprehensive and animating than history.—For while history but waits on fortune with a little too servile a restriction, poetry corrects and commands her:—because, rectifying the obliquity of natural events, by a more equitable formation of rational ones, the poet, as lord Bacon very finely and truly observes, instead of constraining the mind to successes, adapts and calls out events to the measures of reason and virtue; maintaining Providence triumphant against the oppositions of nature and accident.

And still more to distinguish his superiority over the gay prose-fabrics of imagination, the poet, as a re-inforcement to his creative vivacity of invention, superadds the attraction of harmony; and then pours through the whole an irresistible fire of enthusiasm, wherewith to raise and to govern the passions.

Dramatic poetry, in this bold purpose, acts with most immediate and manifest consequence; because assembling together all that animates, invites, or inforces, it works with incredible influence upon the spirits and passions of a people, after they have been refined and induced to its relish.—It does this, in so confessed a degree, that our great philosopher abovenamed, undertaking, in his *De Augmentis Scientiarum*, professedly to consider its preva-

lence, beautifully calls it the bow of the mind ; as if, to express it more clearly, he had said, the stage is an instrument in the hands of the poet, as capable of giving modulation and tone to the heart, as the bow to the violin in the hands of a musician.

There is another advantage in poetry, which still further intitles it to the protection of princes, who are lovers, like your Royal Highness, of ages, which are only to hear of them. Other arts have some single and limited effect ; but the creations of poetry have a power to multiply their species in new and emulative successions of virtue and heroism ; the seeds, as it were, of those passions which produce noble qualities, being sown in all poems of genius.

If such desirable effects are now less common than anciently, it is only because sometimes tuneful emptiness is mistaken for poetry ; and sometimes calm, cold sense conveyed in unpassionate metre ; whereas poetry has no element but passion : and therefore rhyme, turn, and measure, are but fruitless affectations, where a spirit is not found that conveys the heat and enthusiasm. The poet, to say in all in a word, who can be read without excitement of the most passionate emotions in the heart, having been busily losing his pains, like a smith who would fashion cold iron : he has the regular return in the descent of the strokes, the insignificant jingle in the ring of the sound, and the hammering delight in the labour ; but he has neither the penetration, the glow, nor the sparkling.

When in some unbending moments your Royal Highness shall reflect, perhaps, on the most likely measures for diminishing our pretences to poetry, yet augmenting its essential growth, how kind wou'd heaven be to the legitimate friends of the muses, should it, at those times, whisper in your ear, that no art ever flourished in monarchies till the favour of the court made it fashionable !

On my own part, I have little to say, worth the honour of your Royal Highness's notice ; being no more than an humble solicitor, for an event I have nothing to hope from. Not that I presume to represent myself as too stoical to feel the advantage of distinction. I am only too busy to be disposed for pursuing it : having renounced
the

the world, without quitting it; that, standing aside in an uncrowded corner, I might escape being hurried along in the dust of the show, and quietly see, and consider the whole as it passes; instead of acting a part in it; and that, perhaps, but a poor one.

In a situation so calm and untroubled, there arises a salutary habitude of supposing distinction to be lodged in the mind, and ambition in the use and command of the faculties. Such a choice may be silent, but not inactive: nay, I am afraid, he who makes it, is but a concealed kind of Epicure, notwithstanding his pretences to forbearance and philosophy: for while he partakes, in full relish, all the naked enjoyments of life, he throws nothing of it away, but its false face and its prejudices. He takes care to live at peace in the very centre of malice and faction; for, viewing greatness without hope, he views it also without envy.

Upon the whole, though there may be a suspicion of something too selfish in this personal system of liberty, it will free a man in a moment from all those byassing partialities which hang their dead weight upon judgment; and leave him as disinterested a spectator of the virtues or vices of cotemporary greatness, as of that which history has transmitted to him from times he had nothing to do with. I am, therefore, sure, it is no flattery, when I congratulate your Royal Highness on the humane glories of your future reign, and thank you for a thousand blessings I expect not to partake of.

I am,

With a profound respect,

S I R,

Your Royal Highness's

Most obedient and

Most humble servant,

A. HILL.

EPI-

The first part of the paper is devoted to a general
 introduction of the subject. It is shown that the
 theory of the present paper is a special case of
 a more general theory which has been developed
 by other authors. The present theory is based on
 the assumption that the medium is isotropic and
 homogeneous. The theory is then applied to the
 case of a medium which is anisotropic and
 inhomogeneous. The results are compared with
 those obtained by other authors. It is shown that
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The second part of the paper is devoted to a
 detailed discussion of the theory. It is shown
 that the theory is based on the assumption that
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 then applied to the case of a medium which is
 anisotropic and inhomogeneous. The results are
 compared with those obtained by other authors.

P R O L O G U E.

WHEN some raw padd'ler from the waded shore,
 First dares the deep'ning stream, and ventures o'er,
 Light on his floating cork the wave he skims,
 And, wanton in his safety, thinks he swims.
 So shall Alzira's fame our faults protect,
 And from your censure screen each fear'd defect.
 For shou'd we act, unskill'd, the player's parts,
 We act such scenes——as force us to your hearts.
 What floods of tears a neighb'ring land saw flow,
 When a whole people wept Alzira's woe!
 The loveliest eyes of France, in one pleas'd night,
 Twice charm'd, renew'd, and lengthen'd out delight.
 Twice charm'd, review'd the sad, the melting strain,
 Yet, hung insatiate, on the willing pain!
 Thrice thirty days, all Paris sigh'd for sense!
 Tumblers stood still—and thought—in wit's defence;
 Ev'n power despotic felt, how wrongs can move;
 And nobly wept for liberty and love.
 Can it be fear'd then, that our gen'rous land,
 Where justice blooms, and reason holds command;
 This soil of science! where bold truth is taught,
 This seat of freedom, and this throne of thought;
 Can pour applause on foreign song and dance,
 Yet leave the praise of solid sense to France:
 No—That's impossible—'tis Britain's claim,
 To hold no second place in taste or fame.
 In arts and arms alike victorious known,
 Whate'er deserves her choice she makes her own.
 Nor let the conscious power of English wit
 Less feel the force, because a Frenchman writ.
 Reason and sentiment, like air and light,
 Where-ever found, are Nature's common right.
 Since the same sun gives northern climes their day,
 After the east has first receiv'd its ray,
 Why should our pride repel the Muse's smile,
 Because it dawn'd not first upon our isle?
 Fraternal art adopts each alien fame;
 The wise and brave are every where the same.
 From hostile sentiments let discord flow;
 But they who think like friends, should have no foe.

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

Covent-Garden.

<i>Don Carlos</i> , governor of <i>Peru</i> , for the <i>Spaniards</i> , ——— ———	Mr. Wright.
<i>Don Alvarez</i> , father of <i>Don Carlos</i> , and former governor, ———	Mr. Gifford.
<i>Zamor</i> , <i>Indian</i> sovereign of one part of the country, ——— ———	Mr. Lewis.
<i>Ezmont</i> , <i>Indian</i> sovereign of another part, ——— ———	Mr. Havard.

W O M E N,

<i>Alzira</i> , daughter of <i>Ezmont</i> , ———	Mrs. Giffard.
<i>Emira</i> , } <i>Alzira's</i> women.	
<i>Cephania</i> , }	

Spanish and *American* Captains and Soldiers.

SCENE, in the City of LIMA.

ALZIRA.

A L Z I R A.

A C T I.

Don Alvarez and Don Carlos.

ALVAREZ.

AT length the council partial to my prayer,
 Has to a son, I love, transferr'd my power.
 Carlos, rule happy ; be a viceroy long ;
 Long for thy prince, and for thy God, maintain
 This younger, richer, lovelier, half the globe ;
 Too fruitful, heretofore, in wrongs and blood ;
 Crimes the lamented growths of powerful gold !
 Safe to thy abler hand devolve, resign'd,
 Those sovereign honours which oppress'd my years,
 And dimm'd the feeble lamp of wasted age.
 Yet had it long, and not unuseful, flam'd.
 I first o'er wond'ring Mexico in arms
 March'd the new horrors of a world unknown !
 I steer'd the floating towers of fearless Spain
 Through the plow'd bosom of an untried sea.
 Too happy had my labours been so bless'd,
 To change my brave associate's rugged souls,
 And soften stubborn heroes into men.
 Their cruelties, my son, eclips'd their glory :
 And I have wept a conqu'ror's splendid shame.
 Whom heaven not better made, and yet made great.
 Wearied at length, I reach my life's last verge ;
 Where I shall peaceful veil my eyes in rest ;
 If ere they close, they but behold my Carlos
 Ruling Potosi's realm by Christian laws,
 And making gold more rich by gifts from heav'n.

D. Carlos. Taught and supported by your great exam-
 I learnt beneath your eye to conquer realms,

[ple,
 Which

Which by your counsels I may learn to govern ;
Giving those laws I first receive from you.

Alvarez. Not so.—Divided power is power disarm'd.
Outworn by labour, and decay'd by time,
Pomp is no more my wish. Enough for me
That heard in council age may temper rashness.
Trust me, mankind but ill rewards the pains
Of over-prompt ambition. — 'Tis now time
To give my long-neglected God those hours,
Which close the languid period of my days.
One only gift I ask ; refuse not that ;
As friend I ask it ; and as father claim.
Pardon those poor Americans, condemn'd
For wand'ring hither, and this morning seiz'd.
To my disposal give 'em kindly up,
That liberty, unhop'd, may charm the more.
A day like this should merit smiles from all ;
And mercy, soft'ning justice, mark it bless'd.

D. Carlos. Sir, all that fathers ask, they must command.
Yet condescend to recollect how far
This pity, undeserv'd, might hazard all.
In infant towns like ours, methinks 'twere safe
Not to familiarize these savage spies.
If we accustom foes to look too near,
We teach 'em, at our cost, to flight those swords
They once flew trembling from, whene'er they saw.
Frowning revenge, and awe of distant dread,
Not smiling friendship, tames these sullen souls.
The sow'r American, unbroke, and wild,
Spurns with indignant rage, and bites his chain,
Humble when punish'd ; if regarded, fierce.
Power sickens by forbearance : rigid men,
Who feel not pity's pangs, are best obey'd.
Spaniards, 'tis true, are rul'd by honour's law,
Submit unurm'ring, and unforc'd go right.
But other nations are impell'd by fear,
And must be rein'd, and spurr'd, with hard controll.
The gods themselves in this ferocious clime,
Till they look grim with blood, excite no dread.

Alvarez. Away, my son, with these detested schemes !
Perish such politic reproach of rule !
Are we made captains in our Maker's cause,

O'er these new Christians call'd to stretch his name,
 His peaceful name ! and shall we, unprovok'd,
 Bear murders, which our holy cheats presume
 To mispronounce his injur'd altar's due !
 Shall we dispeople realms, and kill to save !
 Such if the fruits of Spain's religious care,
 I, from the distant bounds of our old world,
 Have to this new one stretch'd a Saviour's name,
 To make it hateful to one half the globe,
 Because, no mercy grac'd the other's zeal.
 No, my misguided Carlos, the broad eye
 Of one Creator takes in all mankind :
 His laws expand the heart ; and we, who thus
 Wou'd by destruction propagate belief,
 And mix with blood and gold religion's growth,
 Stamp in these Indian's honest breasts a scorn
 Of all we teach, from what they see we do.

D. Carlos. Yet the learned props of our unerring church,
 Whom zeal for saving souls deprives of rest,
 Taught my late youth, committed to their care,
 That ignorance, averse, must be compell'd.

Alv. Our priests are all for vengeance, force, and fire :
 And only in his thunder act their God.
 Hence we seem thieves ; and what we seem we are.
 Spain has robb'd every growth of this new world,
 Even to its savage nature !—Vain, unjust,
 Proud, cruel, covetous, we, we alone,
 Are the barbarians here !—An Indian heart
 Equals, in courage, the most prompt of ours,
 But in simplicity of artless truth,
 And every honest native warmth, excells us.
 Had they, like us, been bloody ; had they not
 By pity's power been mov'd, and virtue's love,
 No son of mine had heard a father, now
 Reprove his erring rashness.—You forget,
 That when a pris'ner in these people's hands,
 Gall'd and provok'd by cruelty and wrongs,
 While my brave follow'rs fell on every side,
 Till I alone surviv'd, some Indians knew me,
 Knew me, and suddenly pronounc'd my name.
 At once they threw their weapons to the ground,
 And a young savage chief, whom yet I know not,

Graceful approach'd, and, kneeling, press'd my knees.
 Alvarez, is it you, he cry'd—Live long !
 Ours be your virtue, but not ours your blood !
 Live, and instruct oppressors to be lov'd.
 Bless'd be those tears, my son !—I think you weep,
 Joy to your soft'ning soul ! Humanity
 Has power, in nature's right, beyond a father.
 But from what motive sprung this late decline
 From clemency of heart to new-born rigour ?
 Had you been always cruel, with what brow
 Cou'd you have hop'd to charm the lov'd Alzira ?
 Heiress to realms, dispeopled by your sword !
 And though your captive, yet your conqu'ror too.
 'Trust me,—with women worth the being won,
 'The softest lover ever best succeeds.

D. Carlos. Sir, I obey: your pleasure breaks their
 Yet 'tis their duty to embrace our faith : [chains ;
 So runs the king's command.—To merit life,
 Quit they their idol worship, and be free.
 So thrives religion, and compels the blind ;
 So draws our holy altar souls by force,
 'Till opposition dies, and sleeps in peace ;
 So links a govern'd world in faith's strong chain ;
 And but one monarch serves, and but one God.

Alv. Hear me, my son.—That crown'd in this new
 Religion may erect her holy throne, [world,
 Is what, with ardent zeal, my soul desires ;
 Let Heaven and Spain find here no future foe !
 Yet ne'er did persecution's offspring thrive :
 For the forc'd heart, submitting, still resists.
 Reason gains all men by compelling none.
 Mercy was always Heaven's distinguish'd mark ;
 And he who bears it not, has no friend there.

D. Carlos. Your reasons, like your arms, are sure to
 I am instructed and ennobled by them ! [conquer.
 Indulgent virtue dwells in all you say,
 And softens, while you speak, the list'ning soul !
 Since Heaven has bless'd you with this powerful gift,
 To breathe persuasion and uncharm resolves,
 Pronounce me favour'd, and you make me so.
 Warm my Alzira's coldness ; dry her tears ;
 And teach her to be mine.—I love that maid,

Spite of my pride ! blush at it— but still love her !
 Yet will I ne'er, to sooth unyielding scorn,
 Unman the soldier in the lover's cause.

I cannot stoop to fan a hopeless flame,
 And be in vain her slave.—You, Sir, might aid me :
 You can do all things with Alzira's father.

Bid him command his daughter to be kind :
 Bid him — But whither would my love mislead me !
 Forgive the blind presumption of a hope,
 That to my int'rest stoops my father's rank ;
 And sends him beggar to an Indian's door !

Alv. 'Tis done already. I have urg'd it to him.
 Ezmont has mov'd his daughter in your cause.
 Wait the prepar'd event. Heaven has been kind ;
 Since these illustrious captives both are Christians ;
 Ezmont my convert, and his daughter his.
 Alzira governs a whole people's minds ;
 Each watchful Indian reads her studied eye,
 And to her silent heart conforms his own.
 Your marriage shall unite two distant worlds :
 For when the stern repiner at our law
 Sees in your arms the daughter of his king,
 With humbler spirit, and with heart less fierce,
 His willing neck shall court the yoke he scorn'd.
 But look, where Ezmont comes !—Retire, my son ;
 And leave me to complete the task begun. [*Exit D. Car.*

Enter Ezmont.

Welcome, my friend ; your council, or command,
 Has left, I hope, Alzira well resolv'd.

Ezm. Great father of the friendless !—Pardon yet,
 If one, whose sword seem'd fatal to her race,
 Keeps her heart cold, with some remains of horror,
 We move with ling'ring steps to those we fear.
 But prejudice will fly before your voice,
 Whose winning manners consecrate your laws.
 To you who gave us heav'n, our earth is due.
 Yours our new being, our enlighten'd souls ;
 Spain may hold realms by purchase of her sword ;
 And worlds may yield to power—but we to virtue,
 Your bloody nation's unsucceeding pride
 Had made their God disgustful as their crimes !
 We saw him hateful in their murd'rous zeal ;

But lov'd him in your mercy.—From your heart
His influence stream'd accepted; and my crown,
My daughter, and my soul, became your slaves.
Father alike of Carlos and of me,
I give him my Alzira for your sake;
And with her all Potofi and Peru.

Summon the reverend choir; prepare the rites;
And trust my promise for my daughter's will.

Alv. Bleis'd be the long-wish'd found!—This great
work past,

I shall go down in peace, and hail my grave.
Oh, thou great leader! whose almighty hand
Drew the dark veil aside that hid new worlds;
Smile on this union, which, confirmed by thee,
Shall in one empire grasp the circled globe,
And task the sun's whole round to measure Spain!
Ezmont, farewell,—I go to greet my son,
With welcome news, how much he owes my friend.

[*Exit.*

Ezm. [*Alone.*] Thou, nameless Power, unequal'd and
alone!

Whose dreadful vengeance overwhelm'd, at once,
My country, and her gods, too weak to save!
Protect my failing years from new distress.
Robb'd of my all: but this one daughter left me:
Oh, guard her heart, and guide her to be blest'd!

Enter Alzira.

Daughter, be happy, while good-fortune courts thee;
And in thy blessing cheer thy country's hope.
Protect the vanquish'd: rule the victor's will;
Seize the bent thunder in his lifted hand;
And from despair's low seat, remount a throne.
Lend the lov'd public thy reluctant heart;
And in the joy of millions find thy own.
Nay, do not weep, Alzira: tears will now
Seem insults, and reproach thy father's care.

Alz. Sir, my whole soul, devoted, feels your power.
Yet, if Alzira's peace was ever dear,
Shut not your ear to my despairing grief;
But, in my nuptials, read my certain doom.

Ezm. Urge it no more: it is an ill-tim'd sorrow.
Away! I had thy kind consent before.

Alz. No,—you compell'd the frightful sacrifice:

And,

And, ah, remorseless heaven!—at what a time!
 When the rais'd sword of this all-murd'ring lover
 Hangs o'er my people heads with threat'ning sway,
 To strike the trembling remnant from my fight,
 And mark my nuptial day a day of death!
 Omens on omens have pronounc'd it curs'd.

Exm. Quit these vain fears, these superstitious dreams
 Of unconfiding ignorance! What day?
 What omens?—We ourselves, who chuse our acts,
 Make our own days, or happy, or accurs'd.

Alz. 'Twas on this day, the pride of all our state,
 Zamor the great, the warlike Zamor fell;
 Zamor, my lover, and your purpos'd son.

Exm. Zamor was brave; and I have mourn'd his fall.
 But the cold grave dissolves ev'n lovers' vows.

Bear to the altar then a heart resolv'd:
 And let thy summon'd virtue check thy weakness.
 Was not thy soul enroll'd a Christian lately?
 The awful Power that lent those Christians name,
 Speaks in my voice; commands thee to be won.
 Hear him; and learn obedience to his will.

Alz. Alas, my father! spare this dreadful zeal.
 Has not the parent spoke? Why speaks the God?
 I know, and I confess, a father's power;
 At his command to sacrifice the life
 He gave me, is a duty nature taught.
 But my obedience passes nature's bounds;
 Whate'er I see, is with my father's eyes;
 Whate'er I love, is for my father's sake;
 I chang'd my very gods, and took my fathers:
 Yet has this father, piously severe,
 Wrong'd my believing weakness, and undone me.
 He told me to compose my troubled heart,
 Peace held her dwelling at the altar's foot.
 He told me, that religion cur'd despair,
 And soften'd every pang that pierc'd the soul:
 But, ah, 'twas all deceit! all dear delusion!
 Mix'd with the image of an awful God,
 A human image struggles in my heart,
 And checks my willing virtue in its rising.
 Zamor, though dead to nature, lives to love.
 Zamor still triumphs in Alzira's breast,

Lord of her soul, and holds back all her wishes.
 You frown.—Alas, you blame a guilt you caus'd.
 Quench then this flame; too hard for death and time;
 And force me to be his whom most I hate.
 If my lov'd country bids, I must obey.
 Yet, while by force you join unsocial hands,
 Tremble whene'er you drag me to the altar,
 Tremble to hear my tongue deceive my God:
 To hear me to this hated tyrant vow
 A heart, that beats, unchang'd, another's due.

Exm. Alas, my child, what unweigh'd words are these?
 Pity my age, unfit for length'ning woes:
 Nature asks rest: pity these falling tears.
 By all our fates, that all depend on thee,
 Let me conjure thee to be bless'd thyself,
 Nor close in misery my life's last scene.
 Why do I live, but to redeem thy hopes?
 For thy own sake, not mine, assist my care.
 Blast not the ripening prospect of thy peace,
 Hard, and with labour'd patience, slowly grown.
 Now, on thy instant choice, depends thy fate!
 Nor only thine, but a whole people's fate!
 Wilt thou betray them? Have they other help?
 Have they a hope, but thee?—Think, think, Alzira;
 And nobly lose thyself to save a state. [Exit.]

Alz. Cruel accomplishment! sublime defect!
 So feign we virtues to become a throne,
 Till public duty drowns our private truth.

Enter Don Carlos.

D. Carlos. Princess, you give a lover cause to doubt,
 That this long labour of your slow consent
 Springs from a heart too cold to feel his flame.
 While, for your sake, suspended law forbears
 To punish rebels, whom you wish to save,
 Ungrateful, you compel a nation's freedom,
 And bind, in recompence, my chains more close!
 Yet misconceive me not.—I would not owe
 A softened sentiment to having serv'd you;
 That were to bribe a heart my pride wou'd win.
 I shou'd with mingled joy and blushes gain you,
 If, as my perquisite of power you sell.
 Let me attract, not force you.—I would owe you,

All to yourself; nor could I taste a joy,
That, in your giving it, might cost you pain.

Alz. Join, Sir, my fruitless prayers to angry Heav'n!
This dreadful day comes charg'd with pains for both.
—No wonder you detect my troubled soul:
It bursts unveil'd from my disclosing eyes,
And glows on every feature's honest air.
Such is the plainness of an Indian heart,
That it disdains to sculk behind the tongue;
But throws out all its wrongs, and all its rage.
She who can hide her purpose, can betray;
And that's a Christian virtue I've not learnt.

D. Car. I love your frankness, but reproach its cause.
Zamor, remember'd Zamor speaks in this.
With hatred stretch'd beyond th' extent of life,
He crosses from the tomb, his conq'ror's will;
And felt through death revenge's rival love.
Cease to complain, and you may learn to bear.
My fame, your duty, both require a change;
And I must wish it were from tears to joy.

Alz. A rival's grave should bury jealousy.
But whence your right to censure sorrow for him?
I lov'd him; I proclaim it. Had I not,
I had been blind to sense, and lost to reason.
Zamor was all the prop of our fallen world:
And, but he lov'd me much, confess'd no weakness!
Had I not mourn'd a fate he not deserv'd,
I had deserv'd the fate he felt unjustly.
For you,—be proud no more; but dare be honest.
Far from presuming to reproach my tears,
Honour my constancy, and praise my virtue:
Cease to regret the dues I pay the dead;
And merit, if you can, a heart thus faithful. [Exit.]

D. Car. [Alone.] Spite of my fruitless passion, I confess,
Her pride, thus starting its sincere disdain,
Astonishes my thought, and charms my anger.
—What then shall I resolve?—Must it cost more
To tame one female heart than all Peru!
Nature, adapting her to suit her climate,
Left her all savage, yet all shining too!
But 'tis my duty to be master here;

Where

Where, she alone excepted, all obey.
 Since then too faintly I her heart incline,
 I'll force her stubborn hand, and fix her mine.

END of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

Zamor, *and four Indian Captains, in Chains.*

ZAMOR.

FRRIENDS, who have dar'd beyond the strength of
 mortals;
 Whose courage scorn'd restraint, and grew in danger;
 Associates in my hopes and my misfortunes!
 Since we have lost our vengeance, let death find us!
 Why should we longer be condemn'd to life,
 Defenceless to our country and Alzira?
 Yet why should Spanish Carlos 'scape our swords?
 Why thrive beneath a weight of uncheck'd crimes?
 And why has Heaven forsaken us and virtue?
 Ye strengthless powers! whose altars sinoak'd in vain!
 Gods of a faithful, yet a cheated people!
 Why have you thus betray'd us to the foe?
 Why had six hundred Spanish vagrants power
 To crush my throne, your temples, rites, and you?
 Where are your altars? where my glories now?
 Where is Alzira? more herself a god,
 Than your collected queens of fancied heaven!
 Helpless once more thou seest me,—lost Peru!
 O'er shifting sands, through desarts, cross'd in vain,
 From forest wilds, impervious to the sun;
 From the world's wastes, beneath the burning zone,
 I brought thee unhop'd aid! the wond'ring stars
 Beheld me gath'ring from remotest wilds,
 New strength, new prospects, and new means to die!
 Your arms, your furtherance, your vast support,
 New-furnish'd my desires, and wing'd my hope.
 Vengeance and love once more had mann'd my heart.
 But, ah, how vain that hope! how lost that vengeance!
 The slaves of avarice are honour's matters!

Ind.

Ind. Capt. Why left we in the neighb'ring woods our forces?

Why dar'd we pass too bold their guarded gates,
Alone, and unsupported, — rash discoverers?

Zam. Seiz'd but this morning from our dungeon's
Th' infernal murderers have hither brought us, [depth,
Unknowing to what death, though sure to die.
Yet it o'erjoys me, we have met once more.

But where? what place is this? Has none yet heard
Who governs here? what fate Alzira found?
Whether her father is, like us, their slave?

Dear, wretched friends, who share a death, my due,
Can none instruct me what I wish to know?

Ind. Cap. From sep'rate prisons hither led, like you,
Through diff'rent streets we came, the cause not known:
All uninform'd of what you seek to learn.

Great, but unhappy prince! deserving long
A nobler fate! our silent souls lament
Our want of power to save so lov'd a leader.

Now to die with you is our noblest claim,
Since to die for you was a choice denied us.

Zam. Next the wish'd glory of success in war,
The greatest is to die, and die renown'd.

But to die noteless, in the shameful dark,
To die, and leave in chains our suff'ring country!

To fall, undignified, by villains' hands;
'The sacrifice of Europe's outcast bloodhounds!

Horrid with others wounds, and poorly rich,
With others plunder'd treasure; die by butchers!

Blood-stain'd insulters of a yielded world?

Riflers, who gave me up to tire their tortures,

But for discovery of the gold I scorn'd,

As dross, less valued, and less wish'd than they!

To be in death the cause of my friend's dying!

To die, and leave Alzira to my murderers!

'This is a death of horror, not of fame!

This is the body's death—but shakes the soul!

Enter Alvarez, with a guard of Spaniards.

Alv. Live, and be free.

[Spanish Soldiers unfetter the Indians.]

Zam. Ye gods of lost Peru!

What do I hear! — said he, Be free, and live?

What

What vast mysterious accident of virtue ?
 Some power divine, in sport, deceives my wonder !
 Thou seem'st a Spaniard !—and—but thou forgiveſt,
 I cou'd have ſworn thee Chriſtian !—Who ? what art thou ?
 Art thou ſome god ? or this new city's king ?

Alv. Chriſtian I am ; and Spaniard : but no king.
 Yet ſerves my power to ſave the weak, diſtreſs'd. [der !

Zam. What thy diſtinction then ? thou gen'rous won-

Alv. The love of pity, when the wretched want it.

Zam. Pity ! and Chriſtian !—what inspir'd thy great-

Alv. My memory, my duty, and my God. [nefs ?

Zam. Thy God?—perhaps then, theſe inſatiate waſters,
 Theſe human ſeemers, with but forms of men ;
 Theſe thirſters after only gold and blood :
 From ſome coarſe, lawleſs part of Europe came ;
 And ſerve ſome bloodier God that wars with thine ?

Alv. Their faith the ſame with mine, but not their
 nature :

Chriſtians by birth, by error, made unchriſtian,
 In power grown giddy, they diſgrace command.
 Thou know'ſt their faults too well : now, know my duty.
 Twice has the ſun's broad tranſverſe girt the globe,
 'Twice wheel'd the ſummer round your world and ours,
 Since a brave Indian, native of your land,
 To whom ſurprize in ambuſh made me captive,
 Gave me the forfeit life his ſword had won.
 The unexpected mercy forc'd my bluſhes :
 For, I perceiv'd, compaſſion of your wces,
 Was but a duty, when I thought 'twas virtue.
 Thenceforth, your countrymen became my brothers ;
 And I have now but one complaint againſt them ;
 —That I muſt never know his name who ſav'd me.

Zam. He has Alvarez's voice ! He has his features !
 His age the ſame too ; and the ſame his ſtory !
 'Tis he !—there is no other honeſt Chriſtian.
 Look on us all ; and recollect his face,
 Who wiſely ſpar'd thy life to ſpread thy virtues.

Alv. Come nearer, noble youth.—By Heaven, 'tis he !
 Now, my dim eyes, you teach me my decay,
 That cou'd not let me ſee my wiſh indulg'd,
 But clouded ev'n my gratitude !—My ſon !
 My benefactor ! Saviour of my age !
 What can I do ! Inſtruct me to deſerve thee.

Dwell in my fight ; and I will be thy father.
 Thou wilt have lost the merit of thy gift,
 If, from the power it gave, thou claim'st no payment.

Zam. Trust me, my father, had thy Spanish sons
 Shewn but a glimm'ring of thy awful virtue,
 Grateful Peru, now desolately, theirs,
 Had been a peopled world of willing slaves.
 But cruelty, and pride, and plunder, claim them.
 Rather than live among that felon race,
 Hide, hide me, silent death ; and screen my soul
 From the reliefless rage of unfelt curses.
 All I wou'd ask, all I will take from Spain,
 Is but to be inform'd, if Ezmont lives ?
 Or, has his blood new-stain'd their hands with murder ?
 Ezmont ?---perhaps you knew him not ?---That Ezmont,
 Who was Alzira's father ?---I must stop,
 And weep---before I dare go on, to ask---
 Whether---that father,---and that daughter---live ?

Alv. Hide not thy tears : weep boldly---and be proud
 To give the flowing virtue manly way ;
 'Tis nature's mark to know an honest heart by.
 Shame on those breasts of stone, that cannot melt,
 In soft adoption of another's sorrow.
 But be thou comforted ; for both thy friends
 Live, and are happy here.

Zam. And shall I see 'em ?

Alv. Ezmont, within this hour, shall teach his friend
 To live, and hope---and be as bless'd as he.

Zam. Alzira's Ezmont ?---

Alv. From his mouth, not mine,
 Thou shalt, this moment, learn whate'er thou seek'st.
 He shall instruct thee in a smiling charge,
 That has united Spain with sav'd Peru.
 I have a son to bless with this new joy :
 He will partake my happiness, and love thee.
 ---I quit thee,---but will instantly return
 To charm thee with this union's happy story,
 That nothing now on earth has power to sever---
 Yet, which once clos'd, shall quiet warring worlds.

[*Exit, with Guards.*]

Zam. At length, th' awak'ning gods remember Zamor,
 And to atone my wrongs by working wonders,

Have

Have made a Spaniard honest to reward me!
 Alvarez is himself the Christians' God;
 Who long provok'd, and blushing at their crimes,
 In his own right descends, to veil their shame.
 He says, he has a son; that son shall be
 My brother, if, at least, he does but prove
 Worthy, (cou'd man be so) of such a father!
 Oh, day! Oh, dawn of hope, on my sad heart!
 Ezmont, now, after three long years of woe,
 Ezmont, Alzira's father, is restor'd me!
 Alzira too, the dear, the gen'rous maid,
 She, whom my fighting soul has been at work for?
 She, who has made me brave, and left me wretched!
 Alzira too is here! and lives to thank me.

Enter Ezmont.

Oh, ye profuse rewarders of my pain!
 He comes! my Ezmont comes!—Spring of my hopes,
 'Thou father of my lab'ring mind's inspirer!
 Hard let me press thee to a heart that loves thee.
 Escap'd from death, behold returning Zamor.
 He will not, cannot die, while there is hope,
 That he may live to serve a suff'ring friend.
 Speak, speak; and be thy first soft word Alzira!
 Say, she is here; and bless'd, as Heaven can make her.

Ezm. Unhappy prince!—She lives; nor lives remote.
 Words cannot reach description of her grief,
 Since first the news of thy sad death was brought her.
 Long dwelt she, sorrowing, o'er an empty tomb,
 Which, for thy fancied form, she rais'd to weep on.
 But thou still liv'st!—amazing chance!—thou liv'st!
 Heav'n grant some doubtful means to bless thee long,
 And make thy life as happy——as 'tis strange!
 —What brought thee hither, Zamor?

Zam. Cruel question!

Colder than all the deaths I have escap'd from!
 Why dost thou ask? Where else cou'd I have hop'd
 To find, and to redeem thyself and daughter?

Ezm. Say that no more---'tis misery to hear thee.

Zam. Bethink thee of the black, the direful day,
 When that vile Spaniard, Carlos, curse the name!
 Invulnerable, or to sword or flame,
 O'erturn'd those walls, which time, when young, saw built,

By earth attract'd, children of the sun.
 Perish his name! and, Oh, be curs'd my fate,
 Who yet no nearer brought him than to thought,
 In horror of his murders! 'Twas the wretch,
 Who bears that name of Carlos, blasted all.
 'Twas in that name, pillage and slaughter spread!
 'Twas in that name, they dragg'd Alzira from me;
 Buried in dust the temples of our gods;
 And stain'd with the surrounding off'rer's blood,
 Their violated altars! The shock'd pow'r,
 That smil'd expectant on our marriage vow,
 Rush'd back, and press'd in vain his brother gods,
 To vindicate their empire. — Spain's dark power
 Prevail'd; and I was captive led to Carlos.
 I will not terrify thy pitying breast,
 I will not tell thee, to what tort'ring pain,
 That villain Spaniard's avarice condemn'd me.
 Condemn'd me, Ezmont, for the sake of gold!
 Gold, the divinity of beggar Spain;
 And our neglected refuse! — 'Tis enough,
 To tell thee, that amidst their tortures left,
 And seeming dead, they, tir'd, not satisfied,
 Forbore, because I felt not. — I reviv'd,
 To feel, once more, but never to forget,
 The grindings of their insult. Three long years
 Have lent me friends, and hopes, and arms, for vengeance,
 Close ambush'd in the neighb'ring woods they lie,
 Sworn the revengers of their bleeding country.

Ezm. Alas, my heart compassionates thy wrongs:
 But do not seek a ruin that wou'd shun thee.
 What can thy flint-arm'd Indian's courage do?
 What their weak arrows, spoils of fishes bones?
 How can thy naked, untrain'd warriors conquer?
 Unequally oppos'd to iron-men:
 To woundless bosoms coated o'er with safety!
 And arm'd with missive thunders in their hand,
 That stream deaths on us, swifter than the winds!
 No---since the world, they say, has yielded to 'em,
 Yield Zamor and Peru, and let 'em reign.

Zam. Let the world yield---Zamor will always find
 Some gen'rous corner in it, fit for freedom.
 Had I been born to serve, obedience claims

Returns of benefit and due protection :
 Outrage and wrongs require correction only.
 These lightnings and these thunders; these safe shells,
 Cases for fear, which guard their iron war ;
 These fiery steeds, that tear the trampled earth,
 And hurl their headlong riders on the foe ;
 These outward forms of death, that fright the world,
 I can look stedfast on ; and dare despise.
 The novelty once lost, the force will fail.
 Curse on our feeble gold ! it calls in fees,
 Yet helps not to repel the wrongs it draws !
 Oh, had but steel been ours !---but partial heaven
 Has, with that manly wealth, enrich'd our foe !
 Yet, not to leave our vengeance quite disarm'd,
 Depriving us of steel, it gave us virtue.

Ezm. Virtue was bless'd of old :---but,---times are
 chang'd.

Zam. No matter---let us keep our hearts the same.
 Alzira cannot change---Alzira's just.
 Alzira's faithful to her vows and me.
 Save me, ye gods ! from a friend's downcast eye !
 Whence are those sighs and tears ?

Ezm. Too wretched Zamor !

Zam. I thought myself Alzira's father's son ;
 But find these tyrants have unking'd thy soul ;
 And taught thee, on the grave's last edge, to wrong me.

Ezm. They cannot. 'Tis an art I will not learn.
 Nor are our conquerors all unjust ;---for, know,
 'Twas Heaven induc'd these Christians to our clime,
 Less to subdue, and rule us, than instruct.
 Know, they brought with them virtues, here unfound :
 Secrets, immortal, that preserve the soul !
 The science of salvation by belief !
 The art of living bless'd, and dying safe !

Zam. Or I am deaf : or, wou'd to Heaven, I were !
 But, if I heard thee right, thou seem'st to praise
 These pilfering zealots, who usurp thy throne,
 And wou'd convert thy daughter to a slave !

Ezm. Alzira is no slave.

Zam. Ah !---Royal Ezmont !
 Pardon some transport, which despair inflam'd ;
 And, to great woes, indulge a little warmth.

Remember, she was mine by solemn vow :
By thy own oath, before our altar sworn ;
Honour and perjury can never meet.

Ezm. What are our altars ? what our idol gods ?
Phantoms of human coinage, fear'd no more !
I would not wish to hear thee cite their name.

Zam. What ! was our father's altars vain deceit ?

Ezm. It was ; and I have happily disclaim'd it.
May the great single Power, that rules whole heaven,
Lend thy dark heart one ray of truth divine !
May'st thou, unhappy Zamor, learn to know,
And, knowing, to confess, in Europe's right,
Her god should be ador'd, her sons obey'd !

Zam. Obey'd ! Hell blast 'em !—What ! these sons of
rapine ?

They have not robb'd thee of thy faith alone,
But pilfer'd even thy reason !—Yet, 'twas wise,
When thou would'st keep no vows, to own no gods.
But, tell me ;—is Alzira too forsworn ?
'True to her father's weakness has she fallen ?
Serves she the gods of Christians ?

Ezm. Hapless youth !

Though bless'd in my own change, I weep for thine.

Zam. He, who betrays his friend, has cause for weep-
Yet tears, they say, shew pity :—if they do, [ing.
Pity this torment, which thy shame has cost me.
Pity my heart, at once alarm'd, for heaven,
For heav'n betray'd, like me ; and torn at once,
By love, and zeal, and vengeance. Take me, Carlos ;
Drag me to die at my Alzira's feet ;
And I will sigh away a soul, she saves not.
But have a care—be cautious, e're I fall,
Of urging me, too rashly, to despair,
Resume a human heart ! and feel some virtue.

Enter Alonzo.

Alon. My Lord, the ceremonies wait your presence.

Ezm. Farewel—I follow thee.

Zam. No, by my wrongs !

I will not quit this hold, till I have learnt,
What ceremony, what black purpose, waits thee ?

Ezm. Away—be counsell'd—fly this fatal city.

Zam. Not though the Christian power, that blasts my
love,

Shou'd rain down lightnings on my destin'd head,
And my own gods cry'd, stay, I still would follow thee.

Ezm. Forgive the force of an unwish'd refusal. —
Guards, to your care I must commit this madman.
Restrain him — He wou'd violate our altar.
These Pagans, obstinate in idol zeal,
Malign our holy myst'ries; and profane
'The church's solemn service. — Guard the doors.
'Tis not in right of my own power I speak;
But, Carlos, in my voice, commands your care.

[*Exit with Guards, after they have freed him from Zamor.*

Zam. Did I not hear him, friends! — or am I mad?
Did I not hear him use the name of Carlos?

Oh, treachery! Oh, baseness! Oh, my wrongs!
Oh, last, uncredited, reproach of nature!
Ezmont commands for Carlos? — 'Twas not Ezmont:
'Twas that black devil, that scares the Christian cowards,
Lied, in his shape, to scandalize Peru!

Oh, virtue! thou art banish'd from mankind:
Even from Alzira's heart, thou now art fled.
— These villain bart'ers rob us not of gold,
They pay its fatal price, in morals ruin'd.
Detested Carlos, then is here! — Oh, friends!
What council? what resource? to stop despair.

Ind. Cap. Let not my prince condemn the faithful zeal,
That wou'd advise his sorrows. — Old Alvarez
Will strait return, and bring, perhaps, that son,
With whom to share his joy the good man hasten'd.
Urge him to see you safe without their gates:
Then suddenly rejoin your ambush'd friends,
And march, more equal, to your purpos'd vengeance.
Let us not spare a life, but good Alvarez,
And this lov'd son! I, near the wall, remark'd
Their arts, and modes of structure: mark'd their angles,
Deep ditch, broad bulwarks, and their sleeping thunders.
I saw, and weigh'd it all: and found hope strongest.
Our groaning fathers, brothers, sons, and friends,
In fetter'd labour toil, to house their spoilers.
These, when we march to their unhop'd relief,
Will rise, within the town, behind their masters:
While you, mean while, without, advance against them:
And, o'er our dying bodies, proudly heap'd,

Bridge a bold entrance o'er their bloody rampart.
 'There, may we turn, against their tyrant heads,
 'Those fiery mouths of death, those storms of murder,
 'Those forms, that frightening honest, artless bravery,
 Build, on our ignorance, a throne for wrongs.

Zam. Illustrious wretchedness! by Heaven, it charms
 To see those soaring souls out-tower their fortune. [*me,*
 Shall we——yes, still we shall!——recover empire;
 Carlos shall feel Peru, despis'd Peru,
 Knock'd at his trembling heart, and claim atonement.
 Come, dire revenge! thou melancholy god!
 That comfort'st the distress'd with shadowy hopings!
 Strengthen our willing hands: let Carlos die!
 Let but that Spanish murderer, Carlos, die,
 And I am half repaid my kingdom's losses!
 But we are wretches, indolently brave:
 We talk of vengeance; and we sleep in chains!
 Alvarez has forgot me: Ezmont slights me:
 And she I love is theirs, whom most I hate.
 All the poor comfort of my heart is doubting.
 Hark! what surprising noise! [*Shout.*] It rises louder,
 And sudden fires, high-flaming, double day!
 Hark!—from their iron throats, [*Guns.*] yon roaring
 mischiefs
 Pour their triumphant insult. [*Trumpets, &c.*] What new
 Or what new crime, demands this swell of joy? [*feast,*
 Now, in their heedless mirth, descend some god;
 And teach us to be free; or, failing, die.
 'Tis liberty alone, that makes life dear:
 He does not live at all, who lives to fear.

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

ALZIRA *alone.*

SHADE of my murder'd lover! shun to view me:
 Rise to the stars, and make their brightness sweeter;
 But shed no gleam of lustre on Alzira.
 She has betray'd her faith, and married Carlos!
 The sea, that roll'd its wat'ry world betwixt us,

Fail'd to divide our hands——and he has reach'd me !
 The altar trembled at th' unhallow'd touch ;
 And Heaven drew back, reluctant, at our meeting.
 Oh, thou soft-hovering ghost, that haunt'st my fancy !
 Thou dear and bloody form, that skims before me !
 Thou never-dying, yet thou buried Zamor !
 If sighs and tears, have power to pierce the grave ;
 If death, that knows no pity, will but hear me ;
 If still thy gentle spirit loves Alzira :
 Pardon, that even in death, she dar'd forsake thee !
 Pardon her rigid sense of nature's duties :
 A parent's will !——a pleading country's safety !
 At these strong calls, she sacrific'd her love ;
 To joyless glory, and to tasteless peace :
 And to an empty world, in which thou art not !
 Oh, Zamor ! Zamor ! follow me no longer,
 Drop some dark veil, snatch some kind cloud before thee,
 Cover that conscious face, and let death hide thee !
 Leave me to suffer wrongs that Heaven allots me :
 And teach my busy fancy to forget thee.

Enter Emira.

Where are those captives? Are they free, Emira ?
 Where those sad children of my mournful country ?
 Will they not suffer me to see, to hear them ?
 To sit and weep, and mingle with their mournings ?

Emira. Ah, rather dread the rage of angry Carlos,
 Who threatens 'em with some new stroke of horror.
 Some cruel purpose hangs, this moment, o'er 'em !
 For, through this window look, and see display'd,
 The broad red standard, that betokens blood ;
 Loud bursts of death roar from their iron prisons,
 And answer, dreadful, to each others call ! [Guns.
 The council hastes, alarm'd, and meets in uproar. [Shouts.
 All I have heard besides is, that the prince,
 Your father, has been summon'd to attend.

Alz. Immortal guardian of th' endanger'd just !
 Have I for this, in vain, betray'd my peace ?
 Dares the dire husband, recent from the altar,
 New to my forc'd consent,—and scarce yet lord
 Of my repenting hand ; so soon let loose
 His recommission'd murders ! Must my nuptials
 Serve, as the prelude, to my people's blood !

Oh,

Oh, marriage! marriage! what a curse is thine,
Where hands alone consent, and hearts abhor!

Enter Cephania.

Ceph. One of the captive Indians, just set free,
In honour of the joy that crowns this day,
Prays your permission, Madam, to be heard,
And at your princely feet disclose some secret.

Alz. Let him, with firmness, and with freedom enter,
For him, and for his friends, he knows I live.
Dear to my eyes, I mark 'em with delight,
And love, alas, in them, their poor lost country.
———But why alone?———Why one?

Ceph. It is that captain,
To whose victorious hand; I heard, but now,
Alvarez, your new lord's illustrious father,
Ow'd his remitted life, from Indians sav'd.

Emira. With earnest pressure, he has sought your
presence:

He met me entering, and with trembling haste,
Implor'd me to befriend th' important prayer.
He told me, further, that the prince your father,
For some strange cause, this Indian seems to know,
Had charg'd the guards he 'scap'd from, to prevent
His access to your ear———Methinks, there sits
A kind of sullen greatness on his brow,
As if it veil'd, in grief, some awful purpose.

Ceph. I watch'd him—and he walks, and turns, and
weeps:

Then starts, and looks at heaven; and to the gods,
Pours up an ardent sigh, that breathes your name!
I pitied him———but, gather'd, from this freedom,
That he's a stranger to your rank and greatness.

Alz. What rank? What greatness?—Perish all dis-
tinction,

That, from the wrong'd unhappy, bars the great!
Who knows, but this was once some gen'rous friend,
Some brave companion of my Zamor's arms!
Who knows, but he was near him, when he fell;
And brings some message from his parting soul!
How dare I then receive him?——Can my heart
Be proof against the last kind words of Zamor?
Will not the half-lull'd pain, rekindling fresh,

Burn, with increase of smart, and wring my soul?
 ——No matter, ——let him enter.—— [*Exit Cephania.*
 ——Ha, what means

This sudden chillness, sadd'ning round my heart,
 In short, faint flutt'rings never felt before!

Ah, fatal residence! ——From the first hour
 These hated walls became Alzira's prison,
 Each diff'rent moment brought some diff'rent pain.

Enter Zamor.

Zam. Art thou, at length, restor'd me? ——Cruel! tell
 Art thou, indeed, Alzira? [*me!*

Alz. ——Gentle spirit! ——

Forgive me. ——Do not come to chide th' unhappy!
 I have been wrong'd; but —— [*Faints into his arms.*

Zam. Thine, she wou'd have said;
 And her imperfect purpose fully bless'd me.
 Revive, thou dearest, loveliest, lost Alzira!
 Zamor will live no longer, thou'dst thou die.

Alz. The kind, forgiving shade, is still before me!
 It wak'd me, by a sound, that seem'd his name.

Zam. I am no shadow, if Alzira's mine;
 I am thy living lover, at thy feet [*Kneeling.*
 Reclaiming thee, thou noblest half himself!

Alz. Can it be possible, thou should'st be Zamor?

Zam. Thy Zamor —— thine.

Alz. But, —— art thou sure, thou liv'st?

Zam. 'Tis in thy power,
 To make that truth undoubted. ——Do but say
 Thou would'st not have me die, ——and I will live,
 To thank thee; thus with everlasting love.

[*Rises, and catches her in his arms.*

Alz. Oh, days of softness! ——Oh, remembered years,
 Of ever-vanish'd happiness! ——Oh, Zamor!
 Why has the grave been bountiful too late?
 Why sent thee back in vain? to make joy bitter;
 By mix'd ideas of distracting horror!
 Ah, Zamor! ——What a time is this, ——to charm in!
 Thy every word, and look, shoots daggers through me.

Zam. Then mourn'st thou my return?

Alz. I do —— I do.

Because, ——it was no sooner.

Zam. Generous tenderness!

Alz.

Alz. Where hast thou been, thus long, unknown,
till now?

Zam. A wand'ring vagabond, that trod the world,
In fruitless search of means, to save Alzira.

Not all the tort'ring racks of villain Carlos,
Cou'd from my panting heart expell Alzira.

The bloody spoiler tir'd his rage in vain:

I brav'd his wounds and insults.——Life had yet

No leisure to forsake me. Thou requir'it me.

The groans of suff'ring nations reach'd my soul,

And bad it struggle to revenge mankind.

Alas, thou tremblest! Thy soft nature shrinks,

At bare recital of these Spanish virtues.

Doubtless, the guardian god that smiles on love,

Knew thy kind wish:—and, for thy sake, sustain'd me.

And thou wilt thank, I know, his gentle goodness:

Thy pious heart disdains to quit thy gods,

Because they suffer with thee; and have fail'd

To stem th' invading host of Spain's new Heav'n!

Thou hast too little falshood for a Spaniard.

—Hast thou e'er heard of a base wretch, call'd Carlos?

A birth that blackens nature! a taught monster!

Sent, in our shape, from some far distant world,

To humble ours, with sense of human baseness!

They tell me, he is here.—Grant heav'n thou knowest
him!

Thou then shalt guide my vengeance,——to this first,

And vilest of its victims.

Alz. Find him, here——

Black in my breast, he lives: strike, strike, and reach him.

Zam. Hold, heart——and break not yet——This may
be——pity.

Alz. Strike—for—I merit neither life,—nor thee.

Zam. Ezmont, I feel thee; and believe thee all!

Alz. Did he then tell thee?—Had my father power

To dwell so sadly on my hopeless woes,

As to describe 'em to thee?——Did he name

The dreadful husband—his lost daughter owes him?

Zam. No—but thou may'it: for that will harden Za-

That he shall never be astonish'd more!

[*mor,*

Alz. Yes—I will tell it thee—Prepare to tremble:

Not for thyself to tremble,——but for me.

I will

I will lay open the vast horror to thee :
Then thou wilt weep and live ; — and bid me — die.

Zam. Alzira ! — Oh ! —

Alz. This Carlos —

Zam. Carlos !

Alz. He. —

I was this morning sworn forever — his !

Zam. Sworn whose ? — not Carlos ?

Alz. I have been betray'd.

I was too weak alone, — against my country.

— Even on this fatal, this foreboding day,

Almost within thy sight, Christian Alzira

Plighted, in presence of the Christian God,

Her hapless hand to Carlos. — 'Tis a crime,

That hopes no pardon ! — All my gods renounc'd !

My lover wrong'd ! my country's fame betray'd !

All, all, demand revenge. — Do thou then kill me :

Thou wilt strike tenderly — and my glad blood

Shall meet thy dear-lov'd hand — and that way join thee.

Zam. Carlos, Alzira's husband ! — 'tis impossible !

Alz. Were I dispos'd to mitigate my crime,

I cou'd alledge a father's awful power ;

I cou'd remind thee of our ruin'd state :

And plead my tears, my struggles, and distraction :

'Till three long wretched years confirm'd thee dead.

I cou'd, with justice, charge my faith renounc'd

On hatred of those gods, who sav'd not Zamor.

But I disclaim excuse ; — to shun remission.

Love finds me guilty ; and that guilt condemns me.

Since thou art safe, no matter what I suffer.

When life has lost the joys that make it bless'd,

— The shortest liver is the happiest always.

Why dost thou view me with so kind an eye ?

Thou should'st look sternly, and retract all pity.

Zam. No — if I still am lov'd, thou art not guilty.

— Wishing me bless'd, methinks thou mak'st me so.

Alz. When, by my father urg'd, and by Alvarez,

And inly too impell'd, perhaps, to fate,

By some forsaken god, who meant revenge ;

When by the Christian's fears, and my touch'd heart,

At once beset, they dragg'd me to the temple,

Even in the moment when advancing Carlos

Sought my escaping hand, though I then thought thee
 Dead, and for ever lost to my fond hopes :
 Yet then, beneath the altar's sacred gloom,
 I bow'd my soul to Zamor : memory,
 Reliev'd me, with thy image.—Indians, Spaniards,
 All, all have heard, how ardently I lov'd thee,
 'Twas my heart's pride to boast it to the world !
 To earth, to heav'n,——to Carlos, I proclaim'd it !
 And now, e'en now, in this distressful moment,
 For the last time,——I tell thyself, I love thee.

Zam. For the last time ! Avert the menace, Heav'n !
 Art thou at once restor'd——and lost again !

'Tis not love's language, this !——Alas, Alzira !

Alz. Oh, Heaven !——Alvarez comes, and with him
 Carlos.

Enter Don Alvarez, followed by Don Carlos.

Alv. See ! with Alzira there, my life's restorer !

Approach, young hero ! 'tis my son who seeks thee ;
 Spain's delegate, who here holds power supreme :
 My Carlos, bids thee share his bridal joy.

——Meet, and embrace : divide your father's love :
 My son, of nature, one——and one of choice.

Zam. Nam'd he not Carlos ?——Perish such a son,
 As the detested Carlos !

Alz. Heaven avert

The rising tempest, that o'erwhelms my soul !

Alv. What means this wonder ?

Zam. 'Tis not possible !——

No——I wou'd disbelieve attesting gods,
 Shou'd they, from heaven, assert this shock to nature ;
 That such a father——can——have such a son !

D. Car. [To Zamor.] Slave !——from what spring
 does thy blind fury rise ?

Know'st thou not who I am ?

Zam. Thou art——a villain.

My country's horror——and whole nature's shame !
 Among the scourges whom just Heaven has left thee,
 Know me, for Zamor.

D. Car. Thou, Zamor ?

Alv. Zamor !

Zam. Yes——the tortur'd Zamor.

Blush'd to be told it ; and remember, with it,

The bloody rage of thy remorseless cruelty ;
 That basely dar'd insult a yielded captive !
 Now he returns——triumphant in distress,
 To look thee into shame : to see those eyes
 Fall their stretch'd fierceness, and decline before him.
 Thou waster of the world ! Thou licens'd robber !
 Thou whose last spoil was my Alzira's glory !
 Win her against this sword : [*Draws.*]---the sole good
 Zamor can boast he owes thy haughty country ! [gain,
 Now the same hand, that gave the father life,
 Claims, in return, the son's devoted blood :
 And, so reveng'd, atones a dying realm.

Alv. Confounded and amaz'd, I hear him speak ;
 And every word grows stranger !——Carlos cannot
 Be guilty——or, if guilty, cannot answer.

D. Car. To answer, is a poorness I despise.
 Where rebels dare accuse, should power reply,
 'Twould but forget to punish.——With this sword,
 I might ; but that I know the reverence due
 To your protecting presence, well have answer'd.
 ---Madam, [*To Alzira.*] your heart shou'd have instructed
 Why you offend me, while I see you here. [you,
 If not my peace, at least your fame, demands
 That you now drive this outlaw from your thoughts.
 You weep then ! and insult me with your tears ?
 And yet I love, and can be jealous of you !

Alz. Cruel ! [*To Carlos.*] and you, [*To Alvarez.*] my
 father, and protector !
 And thou ! [*To Zamor.*] my soul's past hope, in hap-
 pier times !

Mark---and condole my fate.——Mix your due pity :
 And tremble, at the horror of my woes.
 Behold this lover, which my father chose me,
 Before I knew there was a world, but ours.
 With his reported death our empire fell :
 And I have liv'd to see my father's throne
 O'erturn'd ; and all things chang'd in earth and heav'n !
 By every human help, alas, forsaken,
 At length, my father, from the Christian's God
 Sought help, and screen'd a state, behind his name.
 Compell'd before this unknown power, to kneel,
 A dreadful oath has bound my backward soul,

To love the murd'rer of my real lover !
 In my new faith, I own myself unskill'd,
 But all that virtue taught me, that I know.
 Zamor, I love thee justly : — I confess it.
 What duty calls for, can deserve no shame.
 Yet, where my soul is bound, my heart obeys :
 And I can now be thine, alas, no more.
 Let me be wretched, rather than unjust.
 Carlos, for you, — I am your wife, and victim :
 Yet, in abhorrence of your cruel heart,
 I hold my hand divorc'd ; — and hence abjure you.
 One way to either, I submit, with joy :
 If your swords claim me, I am due to both.
 Which will reward me with the death I wish ?
 Carlos, thou hast a hand already stain'd :
 Thy practis'd poignard need not start at blood.
 Strike then, for due revenge of slighted love ;
 And, punishing the guilty, — — — once be just.

D. Car. I find then, Madam, you wou'd brave my
 Proud of offending one who must forgive. [weakness !
 But you invoke my vengeance, and it comes.
 Your fate is ready — — — for, your minion dies.
 Who waits ? — — a guard there.

Enter Soldiers.

Alz. Cruel Christian insult !

Alv. My son ! what mean you ? What rash transport
 this ?

Think whom you sentence. — 's his person hateful,
 Yet reverence his virtue and his name.
 He, who is helpless, in his hater's hands,
 Claims safety from his weakness. — — — Why, why, Carlos,
 Must I, a second time, remind your mercy ?
 I gave you life : — — but Zamor gave it me.
 Be warn'd — — nor forfeit honour to revenge.

Enter Don Alonzo, with Spanish Soldiers.

Alon. Pardon an entrance, Sir, thus unprepar'd.
 The woods, that border on the neighb'ring plain,
 Pour out a sudden swarm of Indian foes.
 Arm'd they advance, as if to scale our walls :
 And Zamor's name, resounded, rings to heaven.
 Gleamings, from golden bucklers, meet the sun ;
 And in firm line, and close compacted march,

The stretch'd battalions move, in martial justness.
 They hold such discipline, such order'd motion,
 As ne'er was known before to savage foes.
 As if from us they catch'd the lights of war,
 And turn'd the burning lessons on their teachers.

D. Car. Away then: let us think 'em worth our meet-
 ---Heroes of Spain! ye fav'rite sons of war! [ing.
 All corners of the world are yours to shine in.
 Help me to teach these slaves to know their masters.
 Bring him along by force.

Zam. Tyrant, they dare not.
 Or, are they gods, who cannot be repell'd?
 And proof against the wounds, they seek to give?

D. Car. Surround him.

Alz. Spare him, save him!

Alv. Son, be cool;
 And still remember what your father owes him.

D. Car. Sir, I remember, 'tis a soldier's duty
 To bear down opposition: so you taught me.

[Alonzo, and Spanish Soldiers, surround and seize Zamor.
 Your pardon, Sir,——I go, where honour calls me.

[Exit, with Zamor, and all the Spanish Soldiers.

Alz. [To Alv.] Low, at your feet, I fall; your vir-
 tue's claim.

'Tis the first homage fortune yet has taught me.
 Grant me the wish'd release of death's kind hand,
 From miseries, I cannot live to see.

But, dying, let me leave this witness with you,
 'That, true to my first vows, I change not lightly.

Two different claimers cannot both possess
 One faithful heart, that can but once be given.

Zamor is mine; and I am only Zamor's.

Zamor is virtuous, as a fancied angel.

'Twas Zamor gave his life, to good Alvarez!

Alv. I feel the pity of a father for thee.

I mourn afflicted Zamor: I will guard him:

I will protect you both, unhappy lovers!

Yet, ah, be mindful of the marriage tie,

That, but this morning, bound thy days to Carlos.

Thou art no longer thine, my mournful daughter.

Carlos has been too cruel; but repents it:

And this once-cruel Carlos is thy husband.

He is my son too ; and he loves us both.
Pity soon softens hearts, where love has enter'd.

Alz. Ah, why did Heav'n not make you Zamor's father ?

Greatness with sweetness join'd, like fire with light,
Each aiding other, mingle warm with bright.
What the kind wants, th' associate strong supplies,
And from the gentle, peace and calmness rise.

END of the THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

Don Alvarez and Don Carlos.

Shouts, Trumpets, a long and lofty flourish.

ALVAREZ.

DESERVE, my son, this triumph of your arms,
Your numbers, and your courage, have prevail'd ;
And of this last best effort of the foe,
Half are no more ; and half are yours, in chains.

Disgrace not due success, by undue cruelties :

But call in mercy, to support your fame.

I will go visit the afflicted captives,

And pour compassion on their aching wounds.

Mean while, remember, you are man and Christian.

Bravely, at once, resolve to pardon Zamor.

—Fain wou'd I soften this indocil fierceness :

And teach your courage how to conquer hearts.

D. Car. Your words pierce mine, —freely devote

But leave at liberty my just revenge. [my life,

Pardon him, —Why ! the savage brute is lov'd !

Alv. Th' unhappily belov'd most merit pity.

D. Car. Pity ! — Cou'd I be sure of such reward,

I wou'd die pleas'd, —and she shou'd pity me.

Alv. How much to be lamented is a heart,

At once by rage of headlong will oppress'd,

And by strong jealousies and doubtings torn !

D. Car. When jealousy becomes a crime — Guard,

Heaven,

That husband's honour, whom his wife not loves!
Your pity takes in all the world —but me.

Alv. Mix not the bitterness of distant fear
With your arriv'd misfortunes.—Since Alzira
Has virtue, it will prove a wiser care
To soften her, for change, by patient tenderness,
Than, by reproach, confirm a willing hate.
Her heart is, like her country, rudely sweet:—
Repelling force, but gentle to be kind.
Softness will soonest bend the stubborn will.

D. Car. Softness!—by all the wrongs of woman's hate,
Too much of softness but invites disdain.
Flatter'd too long, beauty at length grows wanton,
And, insolently scornful, slights its praiser.
Oh, rather, Sir, be jealous for my glory;
And urge my doubting anger to resolve.
Too low already, condescension bow'd,
Nor blush'd, to match the conqu'ror with the slave!
But, when this slave, unconscious what she owes,
Proudly repays humility with scorn,
And braves, and hates the un aspiring love,
Such love is weakness:—and submission, there,
Gives sanction to contempt, and rivets pain.

Alv. Thus, youth is ever apt to judge in haste,
And lose the medium in the wild extreme.
Do not repent, but regulate, your passion:
Though love is reason, its excess is rage.
Give me, at least, your promise, to reflect,
In cool, impartial, solitude: and still,
No last decision, till we meet again.

D. Car. It is my father asks—and, had I will,
Nature denies me pow'r, to answer, No.
I will, in wisdom's right, suspend my anger.
—Yet—Spare my loaded heart:—nor add more weight;
Lest my strength fail beneath th' unequal pressure.

Alv. Grant yourself time, and all you want comes with
it. [Exit

D. Car. [Alone.] And—must I coldly then, to pen-
five piety,
Give up the livelier joys of wish'd revenge!
Must I repel the guardian cares of jealousy,
And slacken every rein, to rival love!

Must I reduce my hopes beneath a savage?
 And poorly envy such a wretch as Zamor!
 A coarse luxuriance of spontaneous virtue!
 A shoot of rambling, fierce, offensive freedom:
 Nature's wild growth,---strong, but unprun'd, in daring.
 A rough, raw woodman, of this rugged clime;
 Illit'rate in the arts of polish'd life;
 And who, in Europe, where the fair can judge,
 Wou'd hardly, in our courts, be call'd a man!
 —She comes!--Alzira comes!--unwish'd--yet charming.

Enter Alzira.

Alz. You turn, and shun me!--So, I have been told,
 Spaniards, by custom, meet submissive wives.
 —But, hear me, Sir:--hear, even a suppliant wife;
 Hear this unguilty object of your anger,
 One, who can rev'rence, though she cannot love you:
 One, who is wrong'd herself, not injures you:
 One, who indeed is weak,---and wants your pity.
 I cannot wear disguise: be it th' effect
 Of greatness, or of weakness, in my mind,
 My tongue cou'd ne'er be mov'd, but by my heart:
 And that—was vow'd, another's.——If he dies,
 The honest plainness of my soul destroys him.
 ---You look surpriz'd:---I will, still more, surprize you.
 I come, to try you deeply---for I mean
 To move the husband, in the lover's favour!
 —I had half flatter'd my unpractis'd hope,
 That you, who govern others, shou'd yourself
 Be temp'rate in the use of your own passions.
 Nay, I perswaded my unchristian ign'rance,
 That an ambitious warrior's infelt pride
 Shou'd plead in pardon of that pride in others.
 —This I am sure of——that, forgiving mercy
 Wou'd stamp more influence on our Indian hearts,
 Than all our gold on those of men like you.
 Who knows, did such a change endear your breast,
 How far the pleasing force might soften mine?
 Your right secures you my respect and faith;
 ---Strive for my love:——strive for whatever else
 May charm:---if aught there is can charm like love.
 —Forgive me: I shall be betray'd by fear,
 To promise, till I over-charge my power.——

Yet---try what changes gratitude can make.

A Spanish wife, perhaps, wou'd promise more :

Profuse in charms, and prodigal of tears,

Wou'd promise all things-----and forget 'em all.

But I have weaker charms, and simpler arts.

Guileless of soul, and left as nature form'd me,

I err, in honest innocence of aim,

And, seeking to compose, inflame you more.

All I can add, is this :---Unlovely force

Shall never bow me to reward constraint :

But---to what lengths I may be led, by benefits,

'Tis in your pow'r to try : not mine to tell.

D. Car. 'Tis well.---Since justice has such pow'r to
guide you,

That you may follow duty, know it first.

Count modesty among your country's virtues ;

And copy, not condemn, the wives of Spain.

'Tis your first lesson, Madam, to forget.

----- Become more delicate, if not more kind,

And never let me hear the name I hate.

---You shou'd learn, next, to blush away your haste,

And wait in silence, till my will resolves

What punishment, or pity, suits his crimes.

— Know, last, that (thus provok'd) a husband's clemency

Out-stretches nature, if it pardons you.

Learn thence, ungrateful ! that I want not pity :

And be the last to dare believe me cruel.

[*Exit Don Carlos.*]

Em. Madam, be comforted ;---I mark'd him well ;
I see, he loves ; and love will make him softer.

Alz. Love has no pow'r to act, when curb'd by jealousy.
Zamor must die :---for I have ask'd his life.

Why did not I foresee the likely danger ?

--But has thy care been happier ?---Canst thou save him ?
Far, far, divided from me, may he live !

-----Hast thou made trial of his keeper's faith ?

Em. Gold, that with Spaniards, can outweigh their
God,

Has bought his hand :---and, so his faith's your own.

Alz. Then Heav'n be bless'd, this metal, form'd for
Sometimes atones the wrongs 'tis dug to cause ! [crimes,

—But, we lose time :---Why dost thou seem to pause ?

Em.

Em. I cannot think they purpose Zamor's death.
Alvarez has not lost his pow'r so far,
Nor can the council——

Alz. They are Spaniards all.

Mark the proud, partial guilt of these vain men:
Ours, but a country held to yield them slaves:
Who reign our kings, by right of diff'rent clime.
Zamor, mean while, by birth, true sovereign here,
Weights but a rebel in their righteous scale.
Oh, civiliz'd assent of social murder!—
But why, Emira, should this soldier stay?

Em. We may expect him instantly. The night,
Methinks, grown darker, veils your bold design.
Wearied by slaughter, and unwash'd from blood,
The world's proud spoilers, all lie hush'd in sleep.

Alz. Away, and find this Spaniard. Guilt's bought
Opening the prison, innocence goes free. [hand

Em. See! by Cephania led, he comes with Zamor.
Be cautious, Madam, at so dark an hour,
Lest, met, suspected honour should be lost;
And modesty, mistaken, suffer shame.

Alz. What does thy ill-taught fear mistake for shame?
Virtue, at midnight, walks as safe within,
As in the conscious glare of flaming day.
She who in forms finds virtue, has no virtue.
All the shame lies in hiding honest love.
Honour, the alien fantom, here unknown,
Lends but a length'ning shade to setting virtue.
Honour's not love of innocence, but praise;
The fear of censure, not the scorn of sin.
But I was taught, in a sincerer clime,
That Virtue, tho' it shines not, still is virtue;
And inbred honour grows not, but at home.
'This my heart knows; and, knowing, bids me dare,
Should Heav'n forsake the just, be bold and save him.

Enter Zamor, with Cephania, and a Spanish Soldier.

Ah, fly! thy hopes are lost; thy torturer's ready.
Escape this moment, or thou stay'st to die.
Haste—lose no time—begone: this guardian Spaniard
Will teach thee to deceive the murderer's hope.
Reply not; judge thy fate from my despair;
Save, by thy flight, the man I love from death;

The man whom I have sworn t' obey, from blood ;
 And a lost world, that knows thy worth, from tears.
 Thy country calls thee ; night conceals thy steps.
 Pity thy fate, and leave me to my own.

Zam. Thou robber's property ! Thou Christian's wife !
 Thou, who dar'st love me, yet dar'st bid me live !
 If I must live, come thou, to make life tempting.
 But 'twas a cruel wish—How could I shield thee,
 Stript of my power and friends, and nothing left me,
 But wrongs and misery ?—I have no dower
 To tempt reluctant love. All thou canst share
 With me, will be—my desert—and my heart.
 When I had more, I laid it at thy feet.

Alz. Ah, what are crowns that must no more be thine ?
 I lov'd not power, but thee : thyself once lost,
 What has an empty world to tempt my stay ?
 Far in the depth of thy sad desarts, trac'd,
 My heart will seek thee ; Fancy, there, misleads
 My weary, wand'ring steps ; there horror finds,
 And preys upon my solitude ; there leaves me,
 To languish life out in unheard complaints ;
 To waste and wither in the tearless winds ;
 And die with shame at breach of plighted faith,
 For being only thine—and yet another's.
 Go, carry with thee both my peace and life,
 And leave—Ah, would thou couldst !—thy sorrows here.
 I have my lover and my fame to guard,
 And I will save them both—Begone—for ever.

Zam. I hate this fame, false avarice of fancy ;
 The sickly shade of an unsolid greatness ;
 The lying lure of pride, that Europe cheats by ;
 Perish the groundless seemings of their virtue !
 But shall forc'd oaths at hated Christians' altars,
 Shall gods, who rob the gods of our forefathers,
 Shall these obtrude a lord, and blast a lover ?

Alz. Since it was sworn, or to your gods or theirs,
 What help is left me ?

Zam. None—Adieu—for ever.

Alz. Stay—What a farewell this ?—Return, [*Going.*
 I charge thee.

Zam. Carlos, perhaps, will hear thee.

Alz. [*Returning.*] Ah, pity, rather
 Than thus upbraid my wretchedness !

Zam. Think, then,
On our past vows.

Alz. I think of nothing now,
But of thy danger.

Zam. Oh, thou hast undone
The tenderest, fondest lover!—

Alz. Still I love;
Crime as it is, I love thee. Leave me, Zamor,
Leave me alone to die—Ha! cruel! tell me,
What horrible despair, revolving wildly,
Bursts from thy eyes, with purpose more than mortal?

Zam. It shall be so.

[*Going.*

Alz. What wouldst thou? Whither go'st thou?

[*Holding him.*

Zam. To make a proper use of unhop'd freedom:

Alz. By heav'n, if 'tis to death, I'll follow thee.

Zam. Horrors, unmix'd with love, demand me now.
Leave me—Time flies—Night blackens—Duty calls.
Soldier, attend my steps.

[*Exit hastily.*

Alz. Alas, Emira!

I faint—I die—In what ungovern'd start
Of some rash thought he left me?—Haste, Emira,
Watch his fear'd meaning; trace his fatal footsteps;
And, if thou see'st him safe, return, and bless me.

[*Exit Emira.*

A black, presaging sorrow swells my heart!
What could a day like this produce, but woe?
Oh, thou dark, awful, vast, mysterious Power,
Whom Christians worship, yet not comprehend!
If, ignorant of thy new laws, I stray,
Shed from thy distant heav'n, where-e'er it shines,
One ray of guardian light, to clear my way:
And teach me, first to find, then act, thy will.
But, if my only crime is love of Zamor,
If that offends thy sight, and claims thy anger,
Pour thy due vengeance on my hopeless head;
For I am then a wretch, too lost for mercy
Yet, be the wanderer's guide, amidst his desarts!
Greatly dispense thy good with equal hand;
Nor, partial to the partial, give Spain all.
Thou canst not be confin'd to care of parts;
Heedless of one world, and the other's father:

Vanquish'd

Vanquish'd and victors are alike to thee;
 And all our vain distinctions mix before thee.
 Ah, what foreboding shriek!—Again! and louder!
 Oh, heav'n! amidst the wildness of that sound,
 I heard the name of Zamor!—Zamor's lost—
 Hark!—a third time!—And now the mingled cries
 Come quick'ning on my ear!

Enter Emira, frighted.

Emira, save me!

What has he done?—In pity of my fears,
 Speak, and bestow some comfort.

Em. Comfort is lost:

And all the rage of death has sure possess'd him.
 First, he chang'd habits with the trembling foldier:
 Then snatch'd his weapon from him—The robb'd wretch
 Flew, frighted, toward the gate—while furious Zamor,
 Wild, as the fighting rage of wint'ry winds,
 Rush'd to the public hall, where sits the council.
 Following, I saw him pass the sleeping guards;
 But lost him when he enter'd. In a moment,
 I heard the sound of voices cry, He's dead.
 Then, clam'rous calls from ev'ry way at once,
 To arms, To arms!—Ah, Madam, stay not here!
 Fly to the inmost rooms, and shun the danger.

Alz. No, dear Elmira; rather let us try,
 Whether our weakness may not find some means,
 Late and unlikely as it is, to save him.
 I, too, dare die.

Em. They come—Protect us, Heaven!

Enter Don Alonzo.

Alon. Madam, you stir no farther—I have orders
 To seize your person. 'Tis a charge unwish'd.

Alz. Whence dost thou come? What fury sent thee
 What is become of Zamor? [hither?

Alon. At a time
 So full of danger, my respect gives way
 To duty—You must please to follow me.

Alz. Oh, Fortune, Fortune!—This is too severe!
 Zamor is dead, and I am only captive!
 Why dost thou weep? What have a Spaniard's tears
 To do with woes, which none but Spaniards cause?

Come;

Come; if to death thou lead'st me, 'twill be kind:
There only, weakness wrong'd, can refuge find.

[*Exeunt.*

END of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

Alzira, guarded.

ALZIRA.

AM I to die? Answer, ye dumb destroyers!
Ye wretches, who provoke, yet mock at Heaven;
And when you mean to murder, say you judge!
Why does your brutal silence leave my soul
Flutt'ring, 'twixt hope and fear, in torturing doubt?
Why am I not inform'd of Zamor's fate?
They will not speak—No matter—She who hopes
To hear no good, why should she hear at all?
The conduct of these watchful mutes is strange.
They seize me, guard me, and confine me here;
Yet answer nothing, but with looks of hate.
Chancing, but now, to sigh my Zamor's name,
Ev'n these low monsters, struck with Spanish envy,
Started, turn'd pale, and trembled at the sound.

Enter Ezmont.

Alas!—my father, too!

Ezm. To what dark depth
Of sad despair, hast thou reduc'd us all?
See now, the fruits of thy unisf'ning love!
Even in the instant, while, with growing hope,
We pleaded earnest for the life of Zamor;
While we yet hung on the half-granted prayer;
An ent'ring foldier drew our notice toward him.
'Twas Zamor—dreadful, in a borrow'd dress!
At once he hurl'd his furious eyes amongst us,
And his more furious person. Scarce I saw,
So rapid was his motion, that his hand
Held a drawn sword. To enter, reach our seats,
And, lion-like, spring to the breast of Carlos;
Th' assault, the wound, the death, was all one moment.
Out gush'd your husband's blood, to stain your father,

As

As if 'twould lend me blushes for a daughter.
 Zamor, mean while, the dreadful action done,
 Soft'ning to sudden calmness, at the feet
 Of sad Alvarez fell, and to his hand
 Resign'd the sword, which his son's blood made horrid.
 The father started into back'ning terror !
 The murd'rer dash'd his bosom to the ground ;
 I but reveng'd (he cry'd) my wrongs and shame ;
 I but my duty knew—Know you your own.
 Nature your motive, and oppression mine.
 He said no more ; but, prostrate, hop'd his doom.
 Th' afflicted father sunk upon my bosom ;
 The silent night grew frightful with our cries.
 From ev'ry side at once in broke the swarms ;
 A flow of fruitless help surrounded Carlos,
 To stop th' out-welling blood, and hold back life.
 But what most shakes me, tho' tis told thee last,
 Is, that they think thee guilty of his death ;
 And, insolently loud, demand thy own.

Alz. Ah!—can you—

Exm. No. Impossible. I cannot.

I know thy heart too well to wrong thee so.
 I know thee too, too capable of weakness ;
 But not of purpos'd blood. I saw this danger ;
 But thy own eyes, even on the brink of fate,
 Were blinded by thy love, and thou art fall'n.
 Thy husband murder'd by thy lover's hand ;
 The council that accuses, will condemn thee,
 And ignominious death becomes thy doom.
 I came to warn thee, and prepare thy spirit.
 Now, hast'ning back, try every hope for pardon ;
 Or, failing to redeem thee, share thy death.

Alz. My pardon!—Pardon at these wretches hands !
 The prince my father stoop his prayers to them !
 Death, if it hides me from that thought, is rapture.
 Ah, Sir, live on ! hope still some happier day,
 To pay back all these pangs, and bless Peru ;
 Wait that due day, and love the lost Alzira :
 'Tis all the prayer she makes, and all she wishes.
 I pity dying Carlos ; for I find
 His fate too cruel : and I mourn it deeper,
 Thro' fear he has deserv'd it. As for Zamor,
 Whose rashness has reveng'd a country's wrongs,

Urg'd by too keen remembrance of his own,
 I neither censure nor excuse his deed.
 I would have staid him; but he rush'd to die;
 And 'tis not in my choice to live without him.

Exm. Shed thy wish'd mercy here, all-powerful
 Heaven! [*Exit.*

Alz. My weeping father call'd on Heav'n to save me.
 I will not task the grace of Heav'n so far:
 Let me no longer be, and I'm not wretched.
 The Almighty Christian Power, that knows me innocent,
 Exacts (they say) long life, in fix'd distress;
 And suffers not the brave to shorten woe.
 If so, the gods, once mine, were less severe:
 Why should the wretch, who hopes not, struggle on,
 Thro' viewless lengths of circling miseries,
 And dread the hand of death, that points to refuge?
 Sure Christians, in this tale, belie their god.
 His conqu'ring favourites, whom he arms with thunder,
 Can they have right, from him, to waste the world,
 To drive whole millions into Death's cold arms?
 And shall not I, for safety, claim that power
 Which he permits to them for martial rage?
 Ah, Zamor comes! They lead him out to die.

Enter Zamor in chains, guarded by Spaniards.

Zam. Kind in their purpos'd insult, they have brought
 Where my expiring soul shall mix with thine. [*He*
 Yes, my Alzira, we are doom'd together.
 Their black tribunal has condemn'd us both.
 But Carlos is not dead—that wounds me deepest.
 Carlos survives, to boast short triumph o'er us;
 And dies so slowly, that our fate comes first.
 Yet, he must die; my hand not err'd so far,
 But he must die: and when he does, my soul
 Shall snatch th' expected moment, hovering, watchful;
 And hunt him, in revenge, from star to star.
 Pious Alvarez, mournful comes behind,
 Charg'd with our bloody sentence, sign'd in council,
 That murder may be sanctified by form.
 My only grief is, that thou diest for me.

Alz. That, that should leave thy grief without a cause.
 Since I am thus belov'd, to die with Zamor,
 Is happiness unhop'd. Bless, bless my fate,

For this sole blow, that could have broke my chain.
 Think that this period of suppos'd distress,
 This moment, that unites us, tho' in death,
 Is the first time my love was free from woe.

The smiling fate restores me to myself;
 And I can give a heart, now all my own.

If there's a cause for tears, Alvarez claims 'em:

I while he speaks our doom, shall feel but his. [rand.

Zam. See where the mourner comes, and weeps his er-
Enter Alvarez.

Alv. Which of us three, does fortune most distress?
 What an assemblage ours, of mingled woes?

Zam. Since Heaven will have it so, that, from thy
 I should receive Death's summons, let it come: [tongue,
 'Twill have one power to please—for I shall hear thee.

Do not then pity, but condemn me boldly;
 And, if thy heart, tho' Spanish, bends beneath it,
 Think thou but doom'dst an unsubmitting savage,
 Who kill'd thy son, because unlike his father.

But what has poor Alzira done against thee?

Why must she die in whom a people lives;

In whom alone glows that collected soul,

That, in past ages, brighten'd all Peru?

Is innocence a crime where Spaniards judge?

Known, and assum'd by us, for all thy virtues,

The jealous envy of thy land reclaims thee,

And crops thy Indian growth, to creep like Spain.

Alz. Wond'rous old virtue! obstinately kind!

Thou, singly just, amidst a race of thieves!

'Twere to be base as they are, could I stoop

To deprecate a vengeance duly thine.

For thy son's blood be mine the willing sacrifice.

All I require is but escape from slander;

From poor suspicion of a guilt I scorn.

Carlos, tho' hated, was a hated husband;

Whence, even my hatred ow'd his life defence.

He was Alvarez' son too; and, as such,

Call'd for that rev'rence which himself deserv'd not.

As for thy nation, let them praise or blame me;

Thy witness only can be worth my claim.

As for my death, 'tis joy to die with Zamor:

And all the pain I suffer—is for thee.

Alv. Words will have way; or grief, suppress'd in vain,
 Would burst its passage with th' out-rushing soul.
 Whose sorrows ever match'd this mingled scene
 Of tenderness with horror? My son's murderer
 Is Zamor: he who guarded me from murder,
 Is also Zamor. Hold that image fast,
 Afflicted nature. Life, unwish'd by me
 Is due to Zamor. Young, belov'd, untry'd
 In hope's false failings, life might make him happy.
 My taste of time is gone; and life, to me,
 Is but an evening's walk in rain and darkness.
 Father I am (at least I was a father);
 But every father first was form'd a man:
 And, spite of nature's call, that cries for vengeance,
 The voice of gratitude must still be heard.
 Oh, thou, so late my daughter! thou, whom yet,
 Spite of these tears, I call by that lov'd name!
 Mistake not my pursuit. I cannot taste
 Those horrible reliefs that rise from blood.
 It shocks me thro' a soul that feels for three.
 Hard stroke of justice! thus to lose at once,
 My daughter, my deliverer, and my son.
 The council, with misguided view to sooth me,
 Ill chose my tongue to tell their dreadful will.
 True, I receiv'd the charge; for I had weigh'd it.
 'Twere not impossible, perhaps, to save you:
 Zamor might make it easy.

Zam. Can I do it?

Can Zamor save Alzira? Quickly tell me
 How, by what length of torments, and 'tis done?

Alv. Cast off thy idol gods, and be a Christian:
 That single change reverses all our fates.
 Kind to the courted souls of Pagan converts,
 We have a law remits their body's doom.
 This latent law, by Heaven's peculiar mercy,
 Points out a road, and gives a right to pardon.
 Religion can disarm a Christian's anger.
 Thy blood becomes a brother's, so converted,
 And with a living son repays a dead.
 Prevented vengeance, seiz'd in her descent,
 So rests suspended, and forgers to fall.
 From thy new faith, Alzira draws new life;

And both are happy here, and sav'd hereafter.

Why art thou silent? Is the task so hard,
To add eternal life, to life below?

Speak——from thy choice, determine my relief,
Fain wou'd I owe thee yet a second being.

Yes——to restore the life thou robb'ft me of,
A childless father wishes thee to live.

Alzira is a Christian; be thou so.

'Tis all the recompence my wrongs will urge.

Zam. [*To Alzira.*] Shall we, thou fairest, noblest
boast of beauty!

Shall we so far indulge our fear to die?

Shall the soul's baseness bid the body live?

Shall Zamor's gods bow to the gods of Carlos?

Why wou'd Alvarez bend me down to shame?

Why wou'd he thus become the spirit's tyrant?

Into how strange a snare am I impell'd!

Either Alzira dies, or lives to scorn me!

Tell me——When fortune gave thee to my power,

Had I, at such a purchase, held thy life,

Tell me, with honest truth---wou'd thou have bought it?

Alv. I shou'd have pray'd the power, I now implore,
To widen, for his truth, a heart like thine:

Dark as it is, yet worthy to be Christian.

Zam. [*To Alzira.*] Death has no pain, but what I
feel for thee.

Life has no power to charm, but what thou giv'ft it.

Thou, then, art my soul, vouchsafe to guide it.

But, think!---remember, ere thou bid'ft me chuse!

'Tis on a matter of more weight than life;

'Tis on a subject that concerns my gods:

And all those gods in one——my dear Alzira!

I trust it to thy honour——Speak——and fix me.

If thou conceiv'ft it shame, thou wilt disdain it.

Alz. Then, hear me, Zamor---My unhappy father
Dispos'd my willing heart, 'twixt heaven and thee:

The God, he chose, was mine:---thou may'ft, perhaps,
Accuse it, as the weakness of my youth:

But, 'twas not so. My soul, enlarg'd, and clear,
Took in the solemn light of Christian truth.

I saw——at least, I thought I saw, conviction.

And, when my lips abjur'd my country's gods,

My secret heart confirm'd the change within.
 But had I wanted that directive zeal,
 Had I renounc'd my gods, yet still believ'd 'em ;
 That —— had not been error, but a crime :
 That had been mocking Heaven's whole host, at once ;
 The powers I quitted, and the power I chose.
 A chang'd like that, had err'd, beyond the tongue :
 And taught the silent, servile soul, to lie.
 I cou'd have wish'd, that Heaven had lent thee light,
 But since it did not —— let thy virtue guide thee.

Zam. I knew thy gen'rous choice, before I heard it.
 Who, that can die with thee, wou'd shun such death,
 And live to his own infamy? —— Not Zamor.

Alv. Inhuman flighters of yourselves and me !
 Whom honour renders blind, and virtue cruel !

[*A dead march.*]

Hark! --- the time presses. --- These are sounds of sorrow.
Enter Don Alonzo, followed by a mixed Crowd of Spaniards and Americans, mournful.

Alon. We bring obedience to his last command,
 Our dying captain, your unhappy son,
 Who lives no longer, than to reach your bosom.
 A furious crowd of his lamenting friends
 Press, to attend him, and revenge his blood.

Enter Don Carlos, brought in by Spanish Soldiers, and surrounded by a Number of followers, some of whom advance, to seize Alzira.

Zam. [*Interposing.*] Wretches ! keep distance. —— Let Alzira live ;

Mine was the single guilt —— be mine the vengeance.

Alz. Be feasted, ye officious hounds of blood :
 Guiltless or guilty, 'tis my choice to die.

Alv. My son ! my dying son ! --- this silent paleness,
 This look, speaks for thee, and forbids all hope.

Zam. [*To Don Carlos.*] Even to the last then, thou maintain'st thy hate ?

Come --- see me suffer ; mark my eye ; and scorn me,
 If my expiring soul confesses fear.

Look --- and be taught, at least, to die --- by Zamor.

D. Car. [*To Zamor.*] I have no time to copy out thy virtues :

But, there are some of mine, I come to teach thee.

I shou'd, in life, have given thy pride example :
Take it, too late, in death ; and mark it well.

[*To Alv.*] Sir, my departing spirit staid its journey,
First, 'till my eyes might leave their beams in yours ;
And their dim lights expire, amidst your blessing.
Next, what you taught me, 'tis my talk to show,
And die the son of your paternal virtue.

—Eager in life's warm race, I never stopp'd
To look behind me, and review my way.
But, at the gole, before I judg'd it near,
I start——and recollect forgotten slidings.
On the grave's serious verge, I turn——and see
Humanity oppress'd, to cherish pride :
Heaven has reveng'd the earth :—and Heav'n is just !
Cou'd my own blood but expiate what I shed,
All my rash sword has drawn from suff'ring innocence,
I shou'd lie down in dust——and rest in peace.
Cheated by prosp'rous fortune, death deals plainly ;
But——I have learnt to live, when life forsakes me.
Safe and forgiven, be the hand I fall by.
Power is yet mine ; and it absolves my murder.
Live, my proud enemy ; and live in freedom.
Live——and observe, tho' Christians oft act ill,
They must forgive ill actions in another.

—Ezmont, my friend ! and you, ye friendless Indians !
Subjects, not slaves ! be rul'd henceforth by law.

Be grateful to my pity, though 'twas late ;
And teach your country's kings to fear no longer.
—Rival, learn hence the diff'rence 'twixt our gods ;
Thine have inspir'd thee to pursue revenge :
But mine, when that revenge had reach my life,
Command me to esteem, and give thee pardon.

Alv. Virtues like these, my son, secure thy peace ;
But double the distress of us who lose thee.

Alz. Of all the painful wonders thou hast caus'd me,
This change, this language, will afflict me most !

Zam. Die soon, or live for ever.—If thou thus
Go'st on, to charm my anger into envy,
I shall repent, I was not born a Christian,
And hate the justice that compell'd my blow !

D. Car. I will go farther yet ;—I will not leave thee,
Till I have soften'd envy into friendship.

—My

—Mournful Alzira has been too unhappy :
 Lov'd to distress, and married to misfortune !
 I wou'd do something to atone her wrongs ;
 And with a softer sense, imprint her pity.
 Take her ——— and owe her to the hand she hates.
 Live ——— and remember me without a curse.
 Resume lost empire o'er your conquer'd states :
 Be friends to Spain :—nor enemies to me.
 [*To Alvarez.*]—Vouchsafe my claim, Sir, to this son,
 this daughter :

And be both father and protector too.
 May Heaven and you be kind ! and they be Christians !

Zam. I stand immoveable—confus'd—astonish'd
 If these are Christian virtues, I am Christian.
 The faith that can inspire this gen'rous change,
 Must be divine,——and glows with all its God !
 ——Friendship, and constancy, and right, and pity,
 All these were lessons I had learnt before.

But this unnatural grandeur of the soul
 Is more than mortal ; and out reaches virtue.
 It draws—it charms—it binds me to be Christian.
 It bids me blush at my remember'd rashness :
 Curse my revenge——and pay thee all my love.

[*Throws himself at his feet.*]

Alx. A widow'd wife, blushing to be thus late,
 In her acknowledgment of tender pity ;
 Low, at your injur'd feet, with prostrate heart,

[*Kneels with Zamor.*]

Weeps your untimely death ; and thanks your goodness.
 ——Torn by contending passions, I want power
 To speak a thousand truths, I see you merit :
 But honour and confess your greatness wrong'd.

D. Car. Weep not, Alzira—I forgive again.
 —For the last time, my father, lend your bosom.
 Live to be bless'd !—and make Alzira so !

Remember, Zamor—that a Christian—Oh ! [Dies.]

Alv. [*To Exmont.*] I see the hand of Heaven in our
 misfortune.

But justice strikes ; and suff'ers must submit.
 Woes are good counsellors ; and kindly show,
 What prosp'rous error never lets us know.

E P I L O G U E.

Spoken by ALZIRA.

THE Fifth Act pass'd, you'll think it strange to find
 My scene of deep distress is yet behind.
 Task'd for the epilogue, I fear you'll blame
 My want—of what you love, behind that name.
 But, for my soul, I can't, from such high scening,
 Descend, plum down at once—to double-meaning.
 Judges! protect me—and pronounce it fit,
 That solemn sense, shou'd end with serious wit.
 When the full heart o'erflows with pleasing pain,
 Why should we wish to make th' impression vain?
 Why, when two thinking hours have fix'd the play;
 Shou'd two light minutes, laugh its use away?
 'Twere to proclaim our virtues but a jest,
 Should they who ridicule'em, please us best.
 No—rather, at your actor's hands require
 Off'rings more apt; and a sublimer fire!
 Thoughts that may rivet, not efface, the scene:
 Aids to the mind; not flatt'ries for the spleen.
 When love, hate, pity,—doubt, hope, grief, and rage,
 With clashing influence, fire the glowing stage;
 When the touch'd heart, relenting into woe,
 From others fate, does its own danger know:
 When soft'ning tenderness unlocks the mind,
 And the stretch'd bosom takes in all mankind:
 Sure, 'tis no time, for the bold hand of wit
 To snatch back virtues from the plunder'd pit.
 Still be it ours, to give you scenes thus strong,
 And yours to cherish, and retain'em long!
 Then shall the stage its general use endure;
 And every virtue gather firmness here.
 Pow'r be to pardon,—wealth to pity mov'd;
 And truth be taught the art, to grow belov'd:
 Women to charm, with fast and sure effect;
 And men to love'em with a soft respect.
 Till all alike, some diff'rent motive rouses;
 And tragedy, unforc'd, invites full houses.



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Congreve, William
The mourning bride

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